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Alinari, photo.

Vatican, Chapel of Nicholas V.

San Lorenzo giving alms.

Swan Electric Engraving Co.

Fra Angelico

BY

LANGTON DOUGLAS

LONDON

GEORGE BELL AND SONS

1900

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TO

JEAN AND WALTER PALMER

PREFACE

SOME six or seven years ago I began to make the art of Fra Angelico a special subject of study. In course of time, becoming more and more intimately acquainted with the master through his works, the conviction came to me that the popular conception of him was mistaken *au fond*, and that, as an artist, Fra Angelico had never received fair and adequate treatment. The present work owes its inception to that fact.

In seeking to reconstruct for myself his artistic personality, I have not put trust in the conclusions of any other critic, however eminent, but have relied only upon evidence obtained from the artist's paintings and drawings, and upon the testimony of contemporary documents.

There are some who will think that I have attached too much importance to Fra Angelico's studies of Nature and of antique art. They will, perhaps, condemn my whole point of view as "academic" and "stylistic," so applying to it two epithets which to their ears are the most damning that can be conceived. "If," they will say, "this conception of Fra Angelico is the right one, then so much the worse for Fra Angelico."

But, indeed, it seems to my judgment that in the

great and endless controversy which divides the realm of art, the truth lies, as it so often does in this world, somewhere in the middle ground between two extreme positions. It dwells neither with the *intransigenti* of classicalism on the one hand, nor with the propounders of that creed of artistic anarchism which is now so fashionable, on the other. The perfect painter, I venture to think, is not the copyist of Nature or of classical art; but he is not independent of either. As a flower artist, in the spring-time, in a garden of Japan, chooses, and culls, and combines, blooms from here and there with which to make a flower symphony—a symphony that has its origin in his own imagination; as the literary artist selects, sometimes from an ancient treasure-house of language, sometimes from the very mint itself, the words that will most aptly fit his thought; "as the musician gathers his notes and forms his chords until he bring forth from chaos glorious harmony"; so from the forms of antique art, as well as from Nature the painter "selects the elements of his own exquisite combinations." Yes! the creator of beautiful things can go down to Archæology's valley of dry bones, and, from what he finds there, can construct his perfect shapes, clothing them with flesh, and breathing into them the breath of life. And this did Fra Angelico in the Quattrocento.

I have sought to show that, saint as he was, he did not trust only to dreams and visions, nor did he neglect either observation of Nature or the study of classical art. He did not lay up the artist's gift of

seeing in a napkin, but he put it to constant, fruitful use.

My best thanks are due to Sir Walter Armstrong, Mr. Bernhard Berenson, Father Charles Bowden, Mr. Sidney Colvin, Herr C. von Fabriczy, Mrs. Dormer Fawcus, Miss Duff Gordon, Mrs. Herringham, Mr. Ernest Hobson, Mr. Charles Loeser, the Lord Bishop of London, the Cavaliere Girolamo Mancini, Dr. J. P. Richter, Mr. S. A. Strong, Professor Villari, and Dr. G. C. Williamson, for various acts of kindness.

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FRA ANGELICO

INTRODUCTORY

"Fra Giovanni Angelico da Fiesole . . . was no less pre-eminent as a painter and miniaturist than as a religious. . . . He might, indeed, had he so chosen, have lived in the world in the greatest comfort, and beyond what he himself already possessed, have gained whatsoever he wanted more, by the practice of those arts of which, whilst still a young man, he was already a master; but he chose instead, being well-disposed and pious by nature, for his greater contentment and peace of mind, and above all for the salvation of his soul, to enter the order of Preachers. . . . Rightly indeed was he called 'Angelico,' for he gave his whole life to God's service, and to the doing of good works for mankind and for his neighbour. . . . He was entirely free from guile, and holy in all his acts. . . . He kept himself unspotted from the world, and living in purity and holiness, he was so much the friend of the poor, that I think his soul is now in heaven.

"He laboured assiduously at painting, but he never cared to work at any but sacred subjects. Rich indeed he might have been, yet for riches he took no thought. He was wont to say that true riches consist in being contented with little. He

might have borne rule over many, but he did not choose to do so, believing that he who obeys has fewer cares, and is less likely to go astray. It was in his power, too, to have held high place, both within his order and without it; but he cared nothing for such honours, affirming that he sought no other dignity than the avoidance of hell and the attainment of Paradise. And, in truth, what dignity can compare with that which not only religious but all men ought to strive after, namely, that which is to be found in God alone and in a virtuous order of life. . . .

"Fra Angelico was of a most humane and temperate disposition, and living in chastity, he did not become entangled in the world's snares. In fact, he used often to say that he who practised art had need of quiet, and of a life free from care, and that he who had to do with the things of Christ ought to live with Christ. He was never seen to show anger towards any of his brethren, . . . and when he did admonish a friend, he was accustomed to do so gently and with a smiling face. And to those who wished him to work for them, he would reply with the utmost good will, that if they could come to terms with the prior, he would not fail them. In a word, this friar, who can never be too much praised, was most humble and modest in every word and work, and in his pictures showed both genius and piety. The saints that he painted have more of the aspect and character of saintship than any others.

"It was his custom never to retouch or repaint any of his works, but to leave them always just as they were when finished the first time; for he believed, as he himself said, that such was the will of God. It is said, indeed, that Fra Giovanni never took a brush in his hand until he had first offered a

prayer; nor did he paint a 'Crucifixion' without tears streaming down his cheeks. And both in the faces and attitudes of his figures it is easy to find proof of his sincere and deep devotion to the religion of Christ. . . ."

Such is the traditional portrait of Fra Angelico as reproduced in the pages of Vasari. Not without good reason has it impressed itself upon the minds of twelve generations of his readers. As to whence he derived it, there can be no reasonable doubt. The Piagnoni of San Marco, full of filial piety, cherished all stories relating to that saintly triad, Beato Angelico, Sant' Antonino, and Savonarola. Vasari had intimate friends at the convent. And if one of the brothers did not actually write the greater part of this "Life" of Fra Angelico, they at least succeeded in making his biographer adopt their own conception of him, and it was they who supplied Vasari with most of the material for his work. Being aware of the source of this biography, chilling doubts as to its accuracy cannot fail to enter into the mind of the historical student who has some acquaintance with the Piagnone literature of the sixteenth century. For he knows well that Savonarola's followers, enthusiastic, imaginative, intensely mystical, not only inherited their master's belief in miracles and portents, but also developed to a remarkable degree the mythopœic faculty. The earlier accounts of the great men of their order they embroidered over with beautiful stories, which only in our generation historical critics are patiently removing from the original narrative. Witness the dramatic but imaginary account of Lorenzo de' Medici's deathbed interview with the prior of San Marco! The biographical and historical writings of the Piagnoni have all the qualities of fervid hagiography.

And if a rich afterglow affected the imaginations of those Dominicans who in the succeeding age drew Fra Angelico's portrait, surely the colour that the picture thus gained would lose nothing at the hands of Giorgio Vasari! He was too fine a literary artist to spoil a beautiful story at the bidding of historical truth.

But in justice to all who helped to make this biography of the friar, it must be admitted that the scientific study of his artistic achievement, and research amongst such contemporary records as are likely to throw light upon his career, whilst compelling us to reject as fictitious some of its details, confirm on the whole the traditional story—so far as it goes. Its main fault lies not in its inaccuracy, but in its inadequacy. It keeps back more than half the truth. The Dominicans, Fra Giovanni's contemporaries, who fashioned it in its earliest form, saw and appreciated their brother's goodness, his humility, his quiet charm of manner; and therefore the account which they gave of him tells us a great deal of Fra Angelico the religious, Fra Angelico the Catholic saint. It reveals that side of him which most appealed to simple souls of monastic narrowness. But the Dominican painter, as we shall see presently, was not merely a saint—a saint with a happy knack of illustration. His paintings are no mere religious pictographs. He was above all else an artist, an artist to his very finger-tips; who carried about in one body two temperaments which are usually supposed to have but little in common, and which indeed are not often found inhabiting the same frame—the artistic and the saintly. But he was primarily an artist, *an artist who happened to be a saint*.

It is true that in the course of the last two years certain of the younger critics have revolted against

the traditional and popular conception of Fra Angelico. But their change of opinion has scarcely influenced at all even those who have some right to be considered connoisseurs; and the leaders of criticism in England and in France, in Germany and in Italy, still maintain, with but one or two exceptions, that the friar was *un maître isolé, un maître en retard*, that he belonged rather to the thirteenth century than to the fourteenth.

And this is scarcely to be wondered at when we consider the character of recent writings on Fra Angelico. The best-informed, and certainly the most attractive, biography of the master is that of Supino.[1] But its author is content to leave unsolved some of the most important problems which meet a student of Fra Angelico's art, and for the most part to follow well-beaten paths. He does not seriously attempt to reconstruct for himself the friar's artistic personality. Tumiati[2] is also sparing of scientific criticism, and does not discuss the friar's works in their regular chronological order. Full of mystic fervour, he is continually breaking the thread of his story to deliver himself of theological and philosophical meditations, and to quote passages of a somewhat heterogeneous description from English poets and essayists. Dobbert[3] and Wingenroth[4] adhere more strictly to scientific methods of criticism than do the friar's Italian biographers. But they are both, still, very much under the influence of the traditional

[1] B. Supino, "Beato Angelico," Florence, Alinari, 1898.

[2] Domenico Tumiati, "Frate Angelico," Florence, Paggi, 1897.

[3] Dobbert, "Kunst und Künstler des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit. Herausgegeben von Dr. R. Dohme," Acht- und neunundfünfzigste Lieferung. Leipzig, 1878.

[4] Wingenroth, "Die Jugendwerke des Benozzo Gozzoli," Heidelberg, Carl Winter's Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1897.

view of Fra Angelico, and they have not given sufficient attention to some of the pictures of his second and third periods. Even if their theory that the classical elements in the frescoes in the chapel of Nicholas V. are due to Benozzo Gozzoli were a sound one, it would not account for the presence of exactly similar features in the earlier works of the older master.[1]

Fra Angelico as an artist, then, has never received fair and adequate treatment, and it is the Piagnone conception of him, inadequate as it is, which still holds the field. There are many reasons for this, apart from the inherent beauty of the traditional story as written down by Giorgio Vasari. In the first place, it seems to favour the view that most people take of Art. Having no love of her for her own sake, they are content that she should

[1] See Wingenroth, *op. cit.*, p. 70; also p. 76. "Anders gefasst, lautet die Behauptung aber folgendermassen: Angelico hat bis zu seinem sechzigsten Jahre (1447) in Florenz gelebt. Damals entstanden dort die grossen Schöpfungen der Brunellesco, Donatello, Ghiberti, Masaccio, Uccello und Anderer. Ausser einigen Kleinigkeiten hat Fra Giovanni nichts von ihnen übernommen, vielmehr bis ins Alter sich seine Eigenart bewahrt."

It is only just to Dr. Wingenroth to state that in two articles entitled "Beiträge zur Angelico Forschung," published in the "Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft," Band. XXI., 1898, he shows clearly that his views in regard to Fra Angelico's development as an artist have recently undergone a great change. He now recognizes the presence of classical elements in the friar's earlier works.

But Dobbert's theory in regard to the frescoes in the Studio of Pope Nicholas V. was invented in order to account for the presence of certain classical features in those frescoes which that critic believed to be entirely foreign to Fra Angelico's style. Now, therefore, that Dr. Wingenroth has come to see that these features are *not* foreign to the master's style, but are to be found in his earlier works as in his later, he will, no doubt, in time renounce that theory altogether.

always occupy an ancillary position. Painting they regard merely as a means for imparting religious instruction, for telling a story, or for recording a scientific or historical fact. And yet Art, poor handmaid though she be, has in these days a certain vogue. Even quite respectable people desire it to be known that they take an interest in her, that they patronize her. They like books which tell her story, or some edifying portion of it, to be seen on their drawing-room tables. But in such books, if they are to please them, Art must be kept in her proper place. That is to say, it must be recognized in them that she is but the humble assistant of literature, the painstaking imitator of nature, or the servant of religion. And of artists' biographies, they prefer those that are full of literary or theological anecdote, and in which but little prominence is given to the artist's artistic life.

The purveyors of popular literature, recognizing what is required of them, have not failed to meet the demand. They have had wit enough to realize that Vasari and the Dominicans had given them a great opportunity. Of their own strength they could not have devised a story so beautiful as the Piagnone account of Fra Angelico. But in the "Lives of the Painters," the "Memorie" of Padre Marchese, they found ready to hand the kind of material they wanted. Consequently throughout this century there has never been wanting a regular succession of books and magazine-articles relating to Fra Angelico, all bearing a family likeness, all showing unmistakable marks of their origin; but none of which could claim to be based upon a scientific examination of the best sources of knowledge of the artist's personality that we have—his own pictures. The writers of them have been quite content to give

the old traditional portrait, with their own "banal" embellishments, knowing that in doing so they were providing the public with the article it required.

And unfortunately the manufacturers of reproductions of the works of the Italian masters would seem to have conspired with popular writers to keep alive a derogatory view of Fra Angelico's art. Every great artist has his moments of weakness, and the Dominican painter was certainly not without them. But he is perhaps the only master of his own rank of whom it is true that the feeblest of all his productions are those by which he is most widely known. It is not too much to say that in the case of nine persons out of every ten who have any knowledge of him, the angels playing on musical instruments which adorn the frame of the Madonna dei Linajuoli are symbols of his artistic achievement. But these figures, which hold so high a place in popular estimation, are artistically contemptible. They deserve, in fact, all that daring critics have said about them. For they are nothing more than "celestial dolls, flat as paper, stuck fast to their gold frames." To anyone who knows how consummate was Fra Angelico's power of rendering form when he is at his best, it is surprising that even in a moment of weakness he should have given to the world such inferior stuff as this is. That he did so is the more to be wondered at when we call to mind other angels painted by the same artist which are as satisfying to the artistic sense as these are disappointing and grievous. Those who love and reverence Fra Angelico would like to lose all recollection of them, just as they would wish to bury in oblivion the early, brief indiscretions of one whose whole subsequent life has been of such a character as to command their affection and admira-

tion. But it is just these figures in all their inane prettiness that the public have chosen to regard as his most characteristic works. Vulgar copies of them, flatter and more formless than their flat originals, are displayed to view in the shop-windows of every second-rate picture-dealer. They are repeated *ad nauseam* on Christmas cards and almanacks. Reproductions of them are to be seen in the boudoirs of countless ladies who desire to be thought persons of taste and sensibility. Popular preachers make allusion to "their paradisiacal forms and faces" when they desire to give an air of connoisseurship to a rhetorical period. And so it has come about that to most people they are symbols of Fra Angelico's artistic virtues.

For once a great master was shorn of his strength, seduced by mere prettiness. For once he gave himself into the hands of the Philistines. For once his sense of material and spiritual significance would seem to have been almost as low as theirs. For a moment he was all that they would have wished him to be. They will not allow us to forget it!

Now this immense mass of hagiographical literature posing as art criticism, and these innumerable reproductions of Fra Angelico's weakest works, have had together a most disastrous effect upon his artistic reputation. Largely by these means it has come about that in the educated classes there is a general impression abroad that, amongst the painters of the Florentine Renaissance, Fra Angelico occupied much the same position as certain estimable writers of religious poems and religious tales have held in the literature of the Victorian era. We are all of us too much the slaves of general impressions of this kind, and these general impressions are just as hard to eradicate as conclusions arrived at by legitimate

methods of ratiocination. And, unfortunately, the casual contemplation of the friar's pictures in this country and in France tends to keep alive the notion that he was merely a painter of pious pictographs, that as an artist he was a reactionary, and is to be numbered amongst the Giottesques, and not with the men of the new era. For whilst his works in the National Gallery and the Louvre stand on an altogether different plane of merit from the angels of the Linajuoli Madonna, they are not by any means amongst the most remarkable even of his paintings in tempera. And his best panel pictures are immeasurably inferior to his frescoes. Those pretty miniature-like panels all gold and ultramarine, so much overpraised from Vasari's day to ours, give no conception at all of the strength and freedom of the artist who painted the "Adoration of the Magi" at San Marco, or the "San Lorenzo giving Alms" in the Studio of Pope Nicholas. It is impossible, in fact, for anyone who has not seen Fra Angelico's frescoes in his native country to form a just estimate of his artistic achievement.

Of course it is true that in these days, when everyone travels, Fra Angelico's work in fresco is much better known than was the case fifty years ago. But alas! for most of us, such opportunities as are afforded us by modern facilities for travel do not avail us much. We go abroad neither with untrammelled vision nor open minds. We are slow to renounce convictions acquired in early youth and held perhaps through many years of manhood. The true scientific temper is, as Amiel said, "one of the rarest things in the world." And, unfortunately, of all our senses the eye is the one that is most ready to deceive us, and to keep us in deception. We become accustomed to look at things in a certain

way, and too often our prejudices mar and limit our faculty of vision. So when we are brought face to face with a painting by an artist whom we think that we know, instinctively we look in it for all that supports, or seems to support, our previous conception of him, and are blind to its other qualities. "The eye," as Goethe says, "sees what it came to see."

And, moreover, those who, in contemplating Fra Angelico's pictures, seek for confirmation of the traditional view of him, find it, for it is there—in a measure. In his effort to give material form to the most sublime mystical visions that have ever filled the minds of men, he has succeeded to a degree that many of his admirers are quite incapable of appreciating. Truly, "the saints that he painted have more of the aspect of saintship than any others." As we look at such a work as the "Coronation" at San Marco, it seems indeed that "those blessed spirits cannot be otherwise than they are in that picture."

Here, in fact, the eye plays the part of Ananias rather than of Gehazi. It does not tell a direct lie: it keeps back half, and more than half, the truth. Finding in the master's work what our pride of opinion makes us desire to find, we cannot see anything else. The painter's artistic personality as a whole remains quite unrevealed to us. Nay! even at the Vatican itself, in that Studio of Pope Nicholas, on the walls of which Fra Angelico showed most plainly that he was entirely a child of the early Renaissance, the scales do not fall from our eyes. For here temporary circumstances as a rule conspire with our prejudices to rob us of enlightenment. The traveller, if he does discover the remote little chapel which contains Fra Angelico's master-

pieces, is rarely in a state to receive or to be influenced by such evidence as to the true character of his art as is to be met with there. He comes to the consideration of it with all his senses deadened by "gallery fatigue." Before finding Pope Nicholas' Studio he has been in the Stanze. And after a morning spent in deciphering the details of Raphael's splendid illustrations, whatever powers of observation and concentration he may have set out with have long since been exhausted.

Owing, then, to a variety of causes, the Piagnone view of Fra Angelico still holds the field. It is shared by persons holding the most diverse opinions. On the one side are those who inwardly despise "this mild, meek, angelic monk, who," as they say, "bolted his monastery doors, and sprinkled holy water in the face of the antique." On the other side is a great company of persons, both Catholic and Protestant, who love Fra Angelico because of his saintliness. These are prejudiced in his favour because he was a devout and earnest Christian. Those are prejudiced against him for the same reason. In each case theological or anti-theological prejudices are allowed to modify the judgment formed of his merit as an artist, and no serious attempt is made to see his achievement as a whole "as in itself it really is." Now both of these classes of persons have arrived at certain common conclusions in regard to him. Both agree (1) that "he was not in sympathy with the artistic influences and aims of his time;" (2) that "he turned completely aside from the antique;" (3) that "he rejected all study of nature;" (4) that he thought little of technique, and "adhered to the methods of the Giottesques."

Only the systematic study of Fra Angelico's

works will enable us to estimate exactly the value of these conclusions. We propose, therefore, to examine, one by one, the pictures of the Dominican painter, to place them in their chronological order, to discern, to define, and to trace the development of, those peculiar qualities in them that give us a specific kind of pleasure. In this way we shall be able to reconstruct the friar's artistic personality, to comprehend clearly what Fra Angelico was as an artist.

But we shall be better equipped for our task if we first attempt to realize what was the character of the artist's *milieu* in his early years, under what influences he grew up.

CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE

In the broad valley of the Mugello,[1] on a little hill above the Sieve, rises the stronghold of Vicchio. Built by the Florentines early in the fourteenth century to protect their country against the ravages of those turbulent, feudal lords the Conti Guidi, it still preserves a great part of the hexagon of its rubble wall, its two massive gateways, east and west, and some fragments of its flanking towers. Close against its battlements, on the inside, houses have been built. And pots of flowers now stand where once the cross-bow lay at rest, and children's faces look out through the embrasure where men-at-arms kept watch.

From its western port the eye wanders over a country as fair and fertile as any even in Tuscany, bounded on every side by purple mountains. To the south, on the other side of the river, are hills covered with chestnut, with Monte Giovi behind them; to the north are the Apennines of Razzuolo, cleft by deep, shadowy valleys; to the east is the lofty peak of Falterona; whilst to the west, but two miles away, above the green corn and the budding vines,[2] can be seen the cypress-crowned hill of

[1] The Mugello is the name given to the upper and middle part of the valley of the Sieve: see P. Lino Chini, "Storia del Mugello," vol. i., p. 4; and Fontani, "Viaggio pittorico della Toscana," under "Pontassieve."

[2] A part of this chapter was written at Vicchio.

Vespignano, with the Pistoiese Apennines, white with snow, in the far distance. Between these majestic boundaries stretches far and wide the garden of the Mugello. Here is no "wilderness of scathed rock and arid grass" such as Mr. Ruskin[1] has imagined, but a land of corn and wine, a land of flowers and fruit, a land of brooks and springs of water; where, in the month of April, white-crested waves of blossom fleck a broad sea of vivid green, and violets and iris make beautiful the banks of its poplar-shadowed streams.

It was at Vicchio, then, or in its neighbourhood, that Fra Angelico first saw the light in 1387. The Mugello, which had been known in the days of Charles the Great as "a joyous land," was at that time even more prosperous than usual under Florentine rule. For whatever may be the disadvantages of living under the *régime* of a bourgeois oligarchy, it cannot be denied that here, as well as in the neighbouring state of Siena, this form of government brought to the people such peace and security as made it possible for the arts and agriculture to flourish. "A fair and pleasant land it is," writes a contemporary chronicler,[2] "decked with fruits luscious and delightsome, watered, and made beautiful as a garden, by a limpid river which runs through it from end to end, and by many a rivulet which winds about the plain like a trailing garland." A fitting home this for the childhood of one who loved so the coloured things of life, flowers and splendid vestments and bright pigments and the flower-like faces of little children.

Fra Angelico's father, a certain Pietro, gave the

[1] Ruskin, "Giotto and his Works in Padua." London, Allen, 1900, pp. 7, 8.

[2] Gio. d' Jacopo Morelli, "Cronica" (Arch. Stor. Tosc., Serie I[a]).

child the name of Guido, and, before he became a religious, the future master was known to the world as Guido da Vicchio. Beyond the year and place of his birth, and his father's baptismal name, we know nothing with certainty of his parentage or his early life. In fact, we have no record which tells us anything about him before he reached the age of twenty, when he became a postulant at the monastery of the reformed Dominicans at Fiesole. But that it was not his original intention to take vows may be regarded as well-nigh certain. Had it been so, his novitiate would have commenced some years earlier than it did. There can be little doubt that at first his sole aim was to follow the profession of a painter, and that he passed his youth in some artist's *bottega*. Vasari tells us that whilst very young he was perfectly acquainted with the practice of his art, and an earlier biographer, Antonio Billi, records that when still a "giovanotto" he painted a picture on the great screen of Sta. Maria Novella.[1]

The study, too, of Fra Angelico's works, as we shall presently see, confirms in some measure the statement of the biographers. In the reliquary panels at San Marco, in the Cortona "Annunciation," in the "Coronation" of the Louvre, Fra Angelico shows none of the qualities which mark the novice and the amateur. Like all works from the hand of this master, they are admirable in technique. They would seem to confirm the view that

[1] See "Il Libro di Antonio Billi," edited by C. de Fabriczy, in "Arch. Stor. Ital.," 1891, p. 326. Antonio Billi wrote between 1516 and 1530. The great screen was destroyed in 1565. Fra Angelico may have painted at Sta. Maria Novella about 1406-7. But it seems more probable that he was not employed there until after 1418.

in his youth, before entering the cloister, he must have had a thorough professional training under some master who was a competent exponent of the mysteries of tempera painting.

It has been maintained by Baldinucci and others that Fra Angelico's master was Gherardo Starnina. But there is no early documentary evidence to support this theory. Nor is it possible to prove it by the methods of scientific criticism; for there is no single work existing that can with certainty be attributed to Starnina. In fact, in regard to many of the later Giottesques, no certain knowledge is attainable. Painters like Agnolo Gaddi had great factories of pictures, in which almost everything was done by rule, and little scope was left to individual fancy. Moreover, in these *botteghe*, co-operation no less than convention robbed works of art of the stamp of individuality. The handicraftsmen who thronged them worked on each other's pictures and copied each other's figures. Such frescoes as those in the Castellani chapel at Santa Croce are not the work of a single hand, but of a whole school. From such paintings we can get but few reliable data to help us in constructing this or that master's artistic personality. It is difficult to see, then, how any person really imbued with the scientific spirit could venture to pronounce oracularly upon such a question as this.

To make an induction from a few uncertain data, and then to give it to the world with dogmatic emphasis, is, unfortunately, a growing practice in several of the younger sciences, and with some exponents of the new criticism in painting it is becoming habitual.

A little general knowledge of the kind of evidence that lies hidden in Italian archives as to the condition

of art in Italy at the time of the Renaissance would soon lead anyone who is seriously interested in Italian art to rate the pretensions and assertions of a few over-dogmatic critics at their proper value. At Florence and at Siena there are records of hundreds of painters, men who were engaged in important undertakings, and to whom not one existing picture is attributed. But have all their works perished? Have only the works remained of those artists whose names we see in catalogues?

At Siena, for instance, we find the names of one hundred and ninety painters who were at work there in the fourteenth century. Of these I know of only seventeen to whom any works are attributed. We find in the same archives the names of nearly sixty artists who painted there in the thirteenth century. Of these there are only seven whose names we can discover in any list or catalogue. Is it reasonable to seek to assign every picture of either of these epochs that belongs to the Sienese school to one of the very few painters of whose style we have any knowledge? Is it not certain that many paintings in our galleries, and on the walls of our churches, are by artists of whom we know nothing, and can know nothing certainly? I am convinced that an honest, rigid application of the scientific method would lead to many labels being removed from pictures and to few being added. And yet the opposite process is continually going on. We are continually hearing of "discoveries" and rumours of discoveries, the origin of which is really due to an unacknowledged hankering after notoriety on the part of the discoverer. Those who are not overawed by a parade of the terminology of scientific criticism will bring to the consideration of such attributions a healthy scepticism.

For is he in reality scientific who definitely formulates conclusions based upon insufficient data, and then dogmatically proclaims them as though they were facts? The question may seem to be childish and unnecessary, but it is a question that a critic who wishes to be true to the scientific method has need to ask himself continually to-day. For, unless he be watchful, a restless craving for publicity, and many petty jealousies, will warp his critical faculty and rob him of the power of properly estimating the value of evidence. Above all else, the scientific critic should cultivate humility, scepticism, reasonableness, good temper, and, not least of all, a sense of humour. For lack of these qualities on the part of some of its exponents, the method of Morelli has not yet won the general adherence that it ought to have. There are certain problems of art which will perhaps one day be solved, but in regard to which we have not enough data to arrive at a solution at present. There are other problems which, as a distinguished critic has recently reminded us, "are not only unsolved but insoluble." The intelligent layman will have more faith in their knowledge when the hierarchs of the new creed shall have learned to say sometimes "I don't know."

Let it be admitted at once that we know next to nothing about Starnina, and that it is impossible to say whether or not he was Fra Angelico's master. We are, in fact, very much in the dark as to the young Guido's artistic training. And in the effort to discover who his master was the friar's works give us but little assistance. For Fra Angelico had a very marked individuality, and from the first was never a mere imitator. Born nine years before Andrea del Castagno, ten years before Paolo Uccello, thirteen years before Domenico Veneziano, and

fourteen years before Masaccio, he and Masolino were the oldest pioneers of the new movement in painting. He was always eager to acquire new knowledge, but when acquired it had to be thoroughly assimilated before being used. It must pass through the alembic of the master's potent idiosyncrasy. Even when most strongly under the influence of others, as, for example, in his later years, when he owed so much to Michelozzo and Masaccio, he was never content merely to reproduce what he had gained from them. Early in his career he found himself; and no artist was ever more true to his own temperament. Artistically, at least, he dared to live his own life, and his works, too, reveal that in other things he was no respecter of persons. His development was continuous, and he always developed on his own lines. He did not, like another brother of San Marco, Fra Bartolommeo, allow himself to be diverted from his own true course by some masterful personality.

We cannot say, then, who Fra Angelico's master was. We can only relate what were the most important artistic influences in Florence in the time of his youth. There were, in the early years of the fifteenth century, three great centres of artistic life in the city. First, the *botteghe* of the pupils of the Gaddi; secondly, the schools of the miniaturists, and chief amongst these the school of the Camaldolese convent of Sta. Maria degli Angeli; and, thirdly, the group of young sculptors, Jacopo della Quercia and Ghiberti, Brunelleschi and Donatello, who were destined to fashion the most perfect art-works of the Quattrocento. By all these, as we shall see, Fra Angelico was influenced.

And first let us speak of the school of Giotto and of the miniaturists. We cannot, indeed, say who

was Fra Angelico's master. But there is one artist, trained in one of the Gaddi schools, and, moreover, a miniaturist as well as a fresco painter, by whom he would seem to have been influenced, and that is Lorenzo Monaco. This artist, largely in virtue of his technical qualities, stands out from the confused crowd of Agnolo Gaddi's followers. His drawing was not better than that of his other contemporaries. He had, too, as weak a sense of material significance as theirs. In fact, some of his best pictures, the "Adoration of the Magi" and the Trinità "Annunciation," are characterized by an almost total absence of relief. But what charms us in these works is their rich, harmonious colour, their fine technique. In spite of the fact that the picture is wanting in nearly all the essential qualities of great figure painting, few who have been there will forget the moment when, in the dimly-lighted church, the rich glamour of the Camaldolese's "Annunciation" broke upon them as they passed through the iron gates of the Salimbeni chapel.

Lorenzo Monaco's technique, at least in his panel pictures, differs, then, from that of the Gaddi school as described for us by Lorenzo's own contemporary, Cennino Cennini. The reason of this difference requires some explanation. In the history of art, painting upon panels is a later development than mural painting and miniature painting. It was in part derived from the one art, in part from the other. In some schools, in some masters, tempera painting is more closely allied to mural painting. In others the methods of its practitioners are derived in the main from the miniaturists. Now amongst the Giottesques fresco painting was the predominant art, and tempera painting was largely conditioned by it. But Lorenzo Monaco, although a fresco painter and

a pupil of the Gaddi, was very much influenced in his technique by the miniaturists. The cause of this is not far to seek. Lorenzo was a member of the great Camaldolese house of Sta. Maria degli Angeli. For more than a generation a school of miniaturists had been established at this monastery. It had grown to be of great importance, and such members of it as Don Simone and Don Jacopo di Francese had won for it a high reputation throughout Italy. Moreover, Lorenzo Monaco himself practised the art of miniature painting as a member of this famous school. It is not surprising, therefore, that in his panel pictures he should have adopted some of the methods of the miniaturists. From them he acquired greater skill than his brother Giottesques could show in the blending and harmonizing of tones. His flesh tints are more carefully fused. The colour of his draperies is richer and more transparent.

It is in his mode of colouring draperies that the influence of the miniaturists is most clearly seen. The Giottesque, when he set about painting in tempera, say a blue garment, would proceed as follows. He would take three vases. In one he would place ultramarine and biacca in equal quantities; in another, two parts ultramarine and one part biacca; in another, two parts biacca and one part ultramarine. With these three shades of colour he would paint his garment, using only touches of white for the highest lights. Lorenzo Monaco, on the other hand, and especially in his late work, did not rely so entirely upon the mixing of white in different proportions with the pure colour before painting for obtaining his gradations of tone; though of course he placed some white with every colour. In fact, the method of the three vases was considerably modified by the Camaldolese. He no

longer used pure biacca only for the highest lights. To obtain his gradations of tone he was accustomed to draw, with a small brush of minever, fine parallel lines of white upon the main colour of the garment after it had dried.

Now in Fra Angelico's work we find exactly the same modification of the methods of the Giottesques. It would be assuming too much to say for this reason that he was a pupil of Lorenzo Monaco; but there is ground for supposing that the older artist influenced the younger. Perhaps Fra Angelico also learned miniature painting in the school of Sta. Maria degli Angeli. That in his early life he did some work as a miniaturist there can be little reasonable doubt. For, as we shall see, the history of the first two periods of his artistic career is the story of his gradual and complete emancipation from the defects of the miniaturist. But there are no miniatures now in existence that can be traced to him. And although an important school of miniature grew up at San Marco under his influence, there is no evidence to show that he practised this art either there or at San Domenico. Fra Benedetto, assisted by several other brothers, commenced the writing of the choir-books of San Marco, and after his death that part of the work was finished by Fra Giovanni di Guido, a Franciscan. There is no record of any miniatures painted by Fra Benedetto in the "Ricordanze" of the convent. As regards the figures, these were the work of Zanobi di Benedetto degli Strozzi and his assistants. Filippo di Matteo Torelli painted the ornamental borders.[1]

But the most important centres of artistic influence

[1] "Ricordanze di San Marco," I. In the Biblioteca Laurenziana, Florence (Cod. 902). See Appendix II., p. 180.

in the early years of the Quattrocento were the *botteghe* of that young group of architects and sculptors who were destined to win for themselves so glorious a name. The Venetian painting of the sixteenth century and the Tuscan sculpture of the fourteenth are, for many of us, Italy's two most important contributions to art. Her other artistic achievements have often been over-rated. But for these additions to the sum of the world's beautiful things men can never be too grateful to her. Fra Angelico soon became an enthusiast about the new movement. The story of his fruitful admiration of great artists like Brunelleschi and Michelozzo is written in his works. We shall read it there later on. Of the artistic *milieu*, then, of Fra Angelico's early years, the later Giottesques, the miniaturists, and this eager band of youthful sculptors and architects were the chief constituent parts.

In seeking to arrive at a more intelligent appreciation of this or that artist's achievement, it is, of course, of primary importance to obtain some accurate knowledge of the purely artistic influences of his youth. But having regard to the important, although sometimes neglected, fact of the solidarity of every human character, of the interdependence of its several elements, no wise student who wishes to reconstruct for himself an artist's personality will fail to take into account all the other influences that helped to make him what he was. And it is especially important to do this in the case of a Florentine painter of the Quattrocento. For the Florentines, to the detriment of their art, were so much more than artists; and they were very powerfully affected in their art, as in other things, by the religious and philosophical movements of their time.

There were, we find, two great connected movements in Florence in those early years of the fourteenth century, both of which acted upon Fra Angelico and helped to mould his career. In his early youth, Florence became the centre of the humanist movement. Under the patronage of men like Palla Strozzi, adherents flocked to it day by day. Manuel Chrysoloras lectured on Greek to crowded audiences. Niccolò Niccoli sent his emissaries over land and sea in search of manuscripts. The flower of Florentine youth became eager about classical literature. Whilst the actual, if unrealized, tendency of the movement was "the emancipation of the individual from the tyranny of outward systems," it was not regarded by the majority of its first promoters as being in any way hostile to Catholicism. The typical men of the movement in the early years of the Quattrocento are not Lorenzo Valla and Francesco Filelfo, but Giannozzo Manetti and Niccolò Niccoli, Tommaso Parentucelli and Ambrogio Traversari. All of these lived and died as good Christians. Virgil was Dante's guide and companion in his soul's long pilgrimage towards spiritual emancipation. And the early humanists held, with the great Tuscan, that the pursuit of classical culture tended rather to confirm a good Christian in his faith.

A certain tendency to imitate pagan vices showed itself, it is true, amongst a section of the early humanists, and gave earnest men cause for serious alarm. One of the first to sound a note of warning was the great Dominican preacher and scholar, Giovanni Dominici. He was no ignorant revivalist. He was no foe to art or to literary culture. But he deplored the excesses of some of the adherents of the new movement, and determined to do his best

to check them. To promote this object he first sought to reform his own order, and so to make it a more fit instrument for effecting the end that he had in view. And with this aim he established houses of Dominicans with a more rigid rule under men whom he had inspired with some of his own reforming zeal. He wrote treatises, too, in which he expounded his views, and he travelled from end to end of Italy, preaching in all the great towns, and warning his fellow-countrymen of their danger.

When he first preached in Santa Reparata, the impressionable inhabitants of the Tuscan Athens, ever eager to learn some new thing, flocked to listen to the new teacher. He at once gained the ear of the citizens. One of his hearers tells us that he had never been stirred by eloquence so great. "The friar spoke of the Incarnation in such a manner as to pierce asunder soul and body, and to compel all men to follow after him." And, precisely because he was no mere fervid revivalist whose appeal was only to the emotions, his influence was not evanescent. He drew many young men to him who remained faithful to the principles he inspired them with, and won for themselves a merited reputation for saintliness, but who, at the same time, were never insensible to the claims of reason and the intellect. Of such was that eminently rational saint, S. Antonino. And there were others of his comrades who possessed the same excellent qualities of heart and mind.

Amongst those who sought admission to the reformed order were Guido da Vicchio and his brother Benedetto. But for the influence of Dominici, the young Mugellese would probably have been content to follow only the profession of a painter. It was this new teacher, himself a lover of art and a

friend of artists, who led Fra Angelico to devote himself to the religious life.

It was in 1407 that the two brothers presented themselves at the door of the convent which Dominici had founded on the lower slopes of the hill of Fiesole. The founder himself had then left Florence, having been sent to Rome on a mission from the Republic; but his successor welcomed the young men, and passed them on at once to a house of the reformed branch of the order of Cortona, as there was no novitiate at Florence. Fra Angelico returned to Fiesole in the following year, but he was not destined to remain there long. In 1409 the brotherhood was compelled to leave its house there because of its fidelity to the true Pope, Gregory XII., and its consequent refusal to give allegiance to Alexander V., who had been irregularly elected by the council of Pisa, and of whom the Florentines were partisans. The main body of the brethren betook themselves to Foligno, where they found a hospitable welcome at the hands of the head of the house of Trinci. Sant' Antonino, however, and some of the younger brothers, went to Cortona, and remained there until 1411. In that year the Etruscan city came under Florentine rule, and its inhabitants were compelled to accept Alexander's successor, John XXIII., as their Pope. Thereupon Sant' Antonino,[1] loyal still to Gregory XII., left Cortona and joined the rest of his exiled brethren

[1] The movements of Sant' Antonino at this time I have been enabled to trace by the help of certain documents in the Archivio Comunale at Cortona. For my knowledge of them I am indebted to the Cavaliere Girolamo Mancini, the learned archivist and historian of Cortona. Fra Angelico's name does not occur in any existing documents of the convent of San Domenico at Cortona.

at Foligno, returning to Cortona in 1414 with the whole body of the exiled brothers. Subsequently, the schism in the Church was healed by the council of Constance, and in 1418 the friars were enabled to return to their home at Fiesole.

It is probable that Fra Angelico followed the same fortunes as Sant' Antonino and the others of the community who had but lately taken vows. And if such was the case he must have spent seven or eight years of his early manhood in the hill-set Etruscan town.

Cortona stands on one of the eastern spurs of Monte Egidio, high up above the valley of the Chiana. The convent of San Domenico, of which little more than the church remains, occupied the south-western corner of the city, and the view from its garden is remarkable for its extent and beauty. Far below lies the broad, level valley, with the Apennines of Montepulciano on its western side. To the south are low hills which but half conceal the lake of Trasimene. Castiglione del Lago can be seen on the farther shore. This landscape, as we shall presently see, made a powerful impression upon the young painter. But it is not of such influences that we here wish to speak. At Cortona, Fra Angelico's tendencies towards a religious life were strengthened and confirmed. The city was already full of memories of saints. Here had lived in the previous generation that "grande servo di Dio," Frate Riccardo of the Augustinians; who wrote, in exquisite Tuscan, for the use of some pious women, his "Little Garden of Devotion." Here, a century earlier, Margaret of Cortona, a mediæval Magdalen, the friend of the destitute, a promoter of peace, an unsparing foe of simony and corruption in the Church, had spent her later life in the intelligent

organizing of charity, and with that end in view had established a society composed both of men and women for succouring the deserving poor.

But, above all, Cortona spoke to the young Angelico of St. Francis. In a wild gorge, but three miles from St. Mary's Gate, the saint had founded one of his first rude settlements. Tradition said that he had preached and made converts in the streets of the Etruscan city. And on an island of Trasimene, whilst still a young man, he had passed in fasting the forty days of Lent. It was to Cortona St. Francis came, when near to death, on his last sad journey. Whilst, indeed, Fra Angelico was not entirely free from petty jealousies—for in one of his "Last Judgments" he has filled hell with Franciscans—he always held in reverence the founder of the great rival order, and gave him a place of honour in many of his most important works.

And in Fra Angelico's day Cortona was still a city of saints. Four or five of his contemporaries there won for themselves the honour of beatification. In the company of men like the Beato Lorenzo Ripafratta and Sant' Antonino his early years were passed.

Such, then, were the early influences, artistic, intellectual and religious, which helped to mould Fra Angelico the artist and Fra Angelico the saint. The Giottesques, the miniaturists, and the early Tuscan sculptors and architects, as well as the humanists, Giovanni Dominici, and Sant' Antonino, all played a part in the making of the master.

CHAPTER II

FIRST FIESOLAN PERIOD

Fra Angelico's adult life falls naturally into four periods. During the first, which extends from 1409 to 1418, he resided in part at Cortona, in part at Foligno. The second and longest period, which closed in 1436, when the brotherhood first took up their residence in Florence, was passed at Fiesole. Throughout the third period, which extended from 1436 to 1447,[1] San Marco was the artist's home. The last eight years of his life were spent for the most part in Rome.

Now it has been customary hitherto to regard each of Fra Angelico's four important changes of residence—that is to say, his removal from Florence to Cortona in 1409, from Cortona to Fiesole in 1418, from Fiesole to San Marco in 1436, and from San Marco to Rome in, or shortly before, 1447—as marking the commencement of a distinct stage in his artistic life. That this is true as regards his two removals to San Marco and to Rome, no one, I think, would attempt to deny. But a fuller and more accurate knowledge of his earlier achievement renders it necessary that a different division should be made of the first twenty-seven years of his adult career. As we shall presently see, there is only one

[1] It is uncertain when Fra Angelico ceased to reside at San Marco. But there is no evidence to show that he commenced work in Rome before the spring of 1447.

work of the master's that can with any plausibility be assigned to the period of his residence at Cortona, and that has the closest affinities with his earlier works at Fiesole. It would, therefore, be unreasonable to speak of the years that he spent in the Etruscan city and at Foligno as constituting a well-defined epoch in the story of Fra Angelico's development as an artist.

Moreover, whilst his first existing works reveal to us that he was an innovator, and whilst it is obvious that throughout his career he was always learning, always developing, always striving to improve his methods of rendering, nevertheless no sudden advance breaks the even flow of that career until the master reached his forty-fifth or forty-sixth year. Then—that is to say, in the year 1433—a very remarkable change begins to show itself in his art; and in the few years that immediately follow, the evolution of his style is very rapid. During this period he frees himself from the last traces of the cramping influence of the miniaturists; he makes great improvement in drawing and modelling; and, in his pictures, classical forms take the place of Gothic in the features of his madonnas and saints, in the folds of their garments, as well as in his architectural backgrounds. The tyranny, too, of the Gothic framework is gradually relaxed, and in his altar-pieces the attendant saints begin to arrange themselves in groups around the central figure.

The works executed by Fra Angelico, then, during the last three years of his residence at Fiesole have a peculiar character of their own, and stand in a different category from his earlier paintings. I propose, therefore, to discard the old method of dividing the first thirty years of Fra Giovanni's artistic career, and henceforth to speak of that part

of it which preceded 1433 as his early period, whilst the rest of his time of residence at Fiesole I shall style his period of transition. This last title may seem somewhat wanting in definiteness, as every period of life, whether in an individual or a nation, is, in a very real sense, a period of transition. But at the same time it is true that, in the lives of individuals, as well as of nations, there are epochs when the rate of progress or of decadence is for a time tremendously accelerated, and the importance of such epochs has no relation to the length of their duration. In the career of Fra Angelico, the three or four years that immediately preceded the commencement of his residence at San Marco formed such an epoch. At their close he stood out as one of the leaders of the new movement, a pioneer of the Renaissance.

I propose, then, in the light of new knowledge, to trace Fra Angelico's development as a painter through these four periods. In considering each of them we will commence with those works of his the dates of which are known, or approximately known, on unimpeachable evidence. After that we shall proceed, with their help, to ascertain the dates of the others. And so, having arranged his pictures in their proper chronological order, the evolution of the artist's style will become clearer to us.

Here and there it will be necessary to proceed with great deliberation, as we shall be making our way through untrodden ground. No previous biographer of the friar has attempted to consider all his great tempera pictures in their proper sequence. If, however, the reader will accompany me to the end of the journey, he will, I think, agree that there is quite sufficient evidence ready to hand to enable

us to give a complete and connected history of Fra Angelico's artistic life.

The works of Fra Angelico, the actual or approximate dates of which are certain, are: the Madonna dei Linajuoli, now at the Uffizi; the altar-piece of San Marco and the frescoes in that convent; the frescoes at Orvieto; and the frescoes at Rome. We know, too, that the four little reliquary pictures, formerly at Sta. Maria Novella, were painted before the end of the year 1430, and that the series of small panels which formerly decorated a silver-press at the Annunziata cannot have been painted before 1448. With the help of all these pictures we ought to be able to fix, approximately, the dates of those that remain.

And it is easier to do this now than it would have been a decade ago, not only in consequence of the efforts of modern critics of Italian painting, but also through the labours of such students of Italian sculpture and architecture as Fontana and Reymond, and, above all, Fabriczy. For Fra Angelico, as we shall presently see, was profoundly influenced by the great architects and sculptors of his time, and the majority of their most significant adaptations from the works of classical antiquity find a place also in his paintings almost simultaneously with their first appearance in the sister arts. This fact being established as a result of a careful examination of those works of the master of the dates of which there is no question—such as the San Marco altar-piece and its predella—we find ourselves in the possession of a new method for ascertaining at what times his other works first saw the light. Such a means of arriving at the date of a picture can only be regarded as ancillary to the study of the more important features in the evolution of a

painter's style. But at a period when the architects and the sculptors occupied so dominant a position in art as they did in the early years of the Quattrocento, and in the case of an artist so susceptible to their influence as Fra Angelico, the critic who altogether neglects the study of the history of architecture runs great risks of falling into error. And such, in fact, has been the fate of some most distinguished modern critics, who gravely maintain that the Perugia altar-piece, a picture wherein we find a classical canopy, with a Michelozzian frieze adorned with festoons, was painted at an earlier date than 1418, long before such a novelty found a place in any architect's work.

Let us begin, then, with the reliquary pictures that we know were completed before the end of 1430, and with their help endeavour to ascertain what other pictures rightly belong to Fra Angelico's first period, and in what order they were painted. These small panels are four in number. Three of them are at San Marco, and one was lately in the collection of Lord Methuen. They were painted at the order of Giovanni Masi, a pious Dominican of Santa Maria Novella, who was a great collector of relics. And they originally formed the principal decoration of four little shrines which it was customary to place on the high altar of the church on great festivals. We see in these panels considerable differences of style, but they were not, we shall find, painted at very great intervals of time. I can prove, I think, that if we arrange them in their natural order—that is, in accordance with the actual chronological sequence of the events depicted on them—we shall be placing them in the order in which they were painted. That is to say, the panel of the "Annunciation" is the earliest of them, and

Alinari photo.] [*San Marco, Florence.*

THE ANNUNCIATION AND THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI.

that whereon is represented the "Coronation of the Virgin" the latest. To those who regard the "Coronation" panel as being wholly, or in great part, the work of the master himself, this arrangement will cause some surprise; but, as I shall presently show, there are good grounds for supposing it to be the last of the series.

On the first of these panels, now at San Marco, there is depicted the "Annunciation," and below it the "Adoration of the Magi." In the upper picture the Virgin is seated. She bends slightly forward, her hands crossed on her breast. On her knee is an open book. The angel comes swiftly to greet her, and whilst still in movement he delivers the divine message. Between the two figures is a vase full of lilies. Above, just below the apex of the arched frame, is seen God the Father, with clouds around Him and three angels attending Him. A white dove is descending towards the Virgin.

In the scene below, the three kings are presenting their gifts to the divine Child. Amongst the group of attendants on the right is a gorgeous page of the Quattrocento, who would seem to have been studied from life. Below, on the base of the frame, the Virgin is painted in half-figure, with the Child on her arm; and five female saints are on either side of them. The whole work has the character of an exquisite miniature.

The second panel, also at San Marco, is the well-known Madonna della Stella. It has close affinities both with the picture just described and with the Madonna dei Linajuoli (1433), which would seem to indicate that the interval which divided the first of the reliquary panels from the great triptych of the Uffizi was not a very long one

The Virgin is represented standing, and clad in

a long, blue robe. The Child is seated on her left arm. Whilst with her right hand she lightly supports his left arm, her left hand caressingly holds his feet. The infant nestles close to her, pressing his little head against her cheek. The note of the whole representation is maternity—the love of the mother for the child, as well as of the child for the mother. The artist had already expressed the same idea in much the same way on the base of the panel we have just described.

In these pictures Fra Angelico is the first to announce a new departure in the manner of representing the Virgin and Child. The earliest Italian painters, like the Byzantines, had laid stress upon the idea of Mary's sovereignty. In their representations of her the Virgin appears as a queen, grave, melancholy, hieratic, with something of Roman dignity in attitude and countenance. In the fourteenth century she is less detached, less awe-compelling, and more human, more womanly; but as yet she reveals but little maternal sentiment. Nor in her form is there anything matronly. She appears, as M. Reymond has remarked, to be rather an elder sister of the Infant than His own mother.

But in the fifteenth century, first under Fra Angelico and afterwards under Luca della Robbia, all this is changed. With them the Madonna reveals, ever more and more, maternal tenderness, maternal anxiety. They give us a presentation of her as that divine Mother whose life, as she told St. Bridget, was ever divided between joy and grief. And it affects us the more powerfully precisely because neither artist makes any parade of sentiment. Only by the most subtle means do they make us realize the intimateness of the connection between mother and child. Persons who are affected only by crude

THE ASSUMPTION AND DORMITION OF THE VIRGIN.

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and obvious expressions of emotion might deem their presentation of the theme somewhat cold and unsatisfying. But to those who are capable of receiving it, the Madonna del Bosco[1] and the Madonna dell' Impruneta speak of the intense joy and sorrow of motherhood with a poignancy that is almost overwhelming.

This increased sense of the importance of human relationships and of the emotions connected with them is, of course, one of the distinguishing marks of the Renaissance, and Fra Angelico was amongst the first to give it expression. In his latest works at Rome, just as in these his earliest, what touching records there are of motherly love, of childish playfulness! In point of time, twenty years divide the Vatican frescoes from the Madonna della Stella. In point of knowledge and of power of presentation, they are widely separated. But the human mother and child in the "San Lorenzo giving Alms," and the divine mother and child in the reliquary picture, are inspired by the same feelings.

The third of these reliquary pictures was until recently in the possession of Lord Methuen. In it is represented the "Dormition of the Virgin" and her "Assumption." It has lost its original frame, and, in parts, has suffered considerably at the hands of restorers. But enough has been left untouched to show that it was originally the most beautiful of the series. In the lower part of the picture is a somewhat ordinary and conventional treatment of the "Dormition of the Virgin." But the "Assumption" above shows the finest qualities of Fra Angelico's early work. It foretells the "Coronation" of the Uffizi.

[1] See Chap. V., p. 132.

The picture is exquisite in colour and beautiful in pattern. But one of the chief and most unexpected of its charms is that in it Fra Angelico shows a remarkable and unwonted power of rendering movement. The celestial choir in Botticelli's "Nativity" do not float more lightly, more swiftly through the air, than do the six angels playing on instruments above and around the Virgin's head.

In the last of this series of reliquary pictures is represented the "Coronation of the Virgin." It is obvious at a glance that in all the qualities of good figure painting it is much inferior to the other three. And I think that I can show that it was not executed by the master himself, but by some pupil working under his supervision. It is, in fact, in my opinion, a later edition of the great "Coronation" of the Louvre by an inferior hand, in which, with but indifferent success, a classical *motif* has been substituted for the Gothic *motif* of the earlier composition. Let me, then, briefly enumerate the reasons which led me to arrive at this conclusion.

To the artist, one of the greatest charms of Fra Angelico's panel pictures lies in their admirable technique. Now this painting has none of the quality which distinguishes all his work in tempera, both the earliest and the latest. The workmanship throughout is poor and coarse. It is true that the panel has been injured by restorers, but enough of the original paint remains to justify a student in arriving at a very decided opinion upon this point.

Again, Fra Angelico always composed well. But in this picture the composition is peculiarly confused and crowded. In this particular it is in marked contrast to the other reliquary panels. Moreover, it has none of the friar's exquisite sentiment. The expression upon the faces of the angels

Alinari photo.] [*San Marco, Florence.*

THE CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN.

around the throne is a caricature rather than a copy of that which he was wont to give to celestial beings.

In the drawing, too, it is impossible to discover any trace of the master-hand. The line is coarse and broken, and often meaningless, and in the faces and hands we look in vain for that fine and delicate touch that we are accustomed to find in the paintings of the Dominican artist.

But, above all, it is in the modelling that it is so much inferior to Fra Angelico's work. If we compare, for instance, any of these squat, unarticulated figures with the Virgin and the angel in the "Annunciation" of this series, we shall see how wide a gulf divides this picture from any by the master's hand.

The pupil who executed this panel is responsible for other pictures which have been attributed to Fra Angelico, such as the Oxford "Madonna,"[1] the little "Dormition of the Virgin" at the Uffizi, and, in part, the "Marriage of the Virgin" in the same gallery. In these works, as well as in the San Marco "Coronation," we find certain peculiar mannerisms in addition to the deficiencies already

[1] The Oxford "Madonna" has been pronounced to be a genuine work of the master by very high authority, and it is undoubtedly a picture of considerable charm. But I would ask those who believe that it is by Fra Angelico to take special note of certain faults of drawing and modelling, which of themselves, apart from the other considerations that I have urged, are sufficient to convince me that it is not by the master. First, I would draw attention to the Virgin's right hand. It is very large, clumsy, and shapeless. Now Fra Angelico exercised more than ordinary care in the painting of hands. His power of drawing the hand increased, it is true, as time went on—compare, for instance, the hands of the angel and the Virgin in the Cortona "Annunciation" with those of the St. John the Baptist at Perugia—but never did he draw a hand like this. Secondly, I would point out that the Virgin's neck and jaw on the right side are also extremely

mentioned. The artist always exaggerates very much the shadows under the nose, the mouth, and the eyes. He carries this mannerism so far as to give some of his faces quite a grotesque appearance. Again, whilst he tries hard to vary the expression of the hands of the different personages in his pictures, he only succeeds in making them appear very wooden. And, amongst other peculiarities in the drawing of them, he is much addicted to making the first and fourth fingers bend inwards towards the second and third.

But this panel is not only the work of a pupil : it was, I maintain, painted after the others of the series. Of course a most obvious, though not by itself a conclusive, argument in support of this conclusion is that if we arrange these reliquary paintings in the chronological order of the events represented in them, the "Coronation" naturally comes last. Those, indeed, who have held that these pictures were not painted in their natural order have done so because, clinging to the view that the "Coronation" panel is a work of the master, and having to account for its obvious inferiority to his other panels, they have been forced to argue that it is a juvenile, immature work. But when we once recognize that it is not by the master himself, all reason for assigning it to an earlier date than the rest disappears.

But, apart from such considerations, there is one very strong reason for supposing that the "Corona-

ill-drawn. Thirdly, I would ask those who differ from me to observe carefully the proportions of the Virgin's figure. The note that runs through the whole of this part of the composition is clumsiness, and that is surely a quality that we never find in a work of Fra Angelico. The picture, it is true, is somewhat attractive in colour, and the angels are not without a certain *naive* beauty. But that it is not by the master himself I have no manner of doubt.

tion" is a later work than its three companion pictures. In the architectural background we see a distinct departure from Gothic forms.

In the earlier "Coronation of the Virgin" at the Louvre there is a Gothic tabernacle with a hexagonal canopy supported by twisted columns, which was obviously imitated from, or at least inspired by, the beautiful tabernacle of the Medici e Speziali which is still to be seen on the south side of Or San Michele. The form of this canopy dominates and determines the whole scheme of composition. But in the San Marco panel all this is changed. In place of a Gothic tabernacle we have a throne of classical form. The back of it is surmounted by an obtuse-angled *frontespizio*, with a tympanum, resting directly upon a Brunelleschian architrave without frieze or cornice. The pilasters, between which is stretched a piece of arras, are severely plain, being without capitals or adornment of any kind.

The important features, then, of Fra Angelico's architectural design are (1) the plain, obtuse-angled tympanum,[1] (2) the architrave composed of three bands, and (3) the unadorned pilasters. These three features we find in the works of one architect only of those who were active in the first half of the Quattrocento, and that architect is Brunelleschi. In his early works we find window-frames which, in form, have close affinities with the back of this throne. In designing them the architect had, no

[1] The earliest existing examples of the obtuse-angled tympanum in the architecture of the Renaissance are to be found: (1) in the tabernacle on the east wall of Or San Michele, attributed to Donatello, but actually, I believe, by his assistant Michelozzo, which was built at the order of the Parte Guelfa in 1423-4; (2) above the door of the Cappella de' Pazzi at Santa Croce, built in 1429; (3) on Jacopo della Quercia's font at Siena, 1428-33.

doubt, in his mind those which are still to be seen on the exterior of old San Giovanni. And it might be argued that Fra Angelico, or the pupil working under his directions, went direct to the original source, to the Florentine Baptistery, and adapted the design of the window-frames there, omitting the narrow frieze and simplifying the tympanum and pilaster. But it would be entirely contrary to the natural order of things for a painter to take the lead in a movement of this kind. And it is only reasonable to suppose that, in designing his throne, the artist was influenced by Brunelleschi.

There is only one serious objection to be made to this theory, and that is that there is no existing Brunelleschian window-frame with an obtuse-angled tympanum which was erected before 1430. The earliest examples are on the façade of the Hospital of the Innocenti and on the exterior of the choir chapels of San Lorenzo. The design for the Innocenti[1] was made, it is true, in 1419, and the model of San Lorenzo in 1420, but in neither case were the window-frames built until twenty years later.[2] As, however, the form of them was favoured by Brunelleschi, and was in his mind throughout the intervening time, it is not unreasonable to suppose that Fra Angelico, if he did not actually study the model for San Lorenzo, took his design from some building by the architect—perhaps a palace—which has since been destroyed or suffered alteration.

It may be thought that I have devoted too much time to this crude and somewhat feeble piece of architectural design, which occurs, after all, in a picture that is not by the master himself, but merely painted

[1] Fabriczy, "Filippo Brunelleschi," Stuttgart, 1892, p. 245 *et seq.*

[2] Fabriczy, *op. cit.*, pp. 163, 582, 583.

under his direction. Such a criticism would be justifiable if this classical detail could be considered merely by itself. But it will be seen at once to be of greater significance, when we perceive that it does not stand by itself, but that it is the first of a series of some thirty studies of classical form to be found in as many pictures, which owe their origin to the same artist; that it was quickly followed by others of greater importance; and that such architectural details are to be regarded as the earliest and most obvious manifestations in painting of a great artistic movement which affected every detail of drawing and composition.

These four reliquary panels, as I have already indicated, are closely connected with each other. The Madonna and Child on the base of the "Annunciation" panel are intimately related to those of the Madonna della Stella; and the angels on the frame of the Madonna della Stella have close affinities with those of the Madonna dei Linajuoli which was painted in 1433. Moreover, the fact that the child in the "Annunciation" is represented as almost nude, inclines the critic, who has studied the history of representations of the infant Jesus in painting and sculpture, to assign it to no earlier date than the second half of the third decade of the Quattrocento.

To conclude, these four pictures all form one connected series, in which are represented six scenes from the life of the Virgin: the "Annunciation," the "Adoration of the Magi," the "Madonna and Child," the "Dormition of the Virgin," her "Assumption," and her "Coronation." They were painted for a church dedicated to the Madonna, and, on great festivals, were one of its principal decorations. They were all executed, I believe, between the year

1425 and the end of 1430, and the "Coronation," the last of the series, was not painted by Fra Angelico himself, but by a pupil of his working under his direction. Taking, then, these reliquary pictures as a starting-point, we will now endeavour to discover the approximate dates of other early works of the master.

We will begin with the Cortona "Annunciation," a picture which is universally regarded as belonging to Fra Angelico's first period. If we compare this "Annunciation" with the earliest of the reliquary pictures, which has the same subject, we at once see that there is a close relationship between them. The announcing angel, for instance, in the smaller picture is a reduced copy of that of the Cortona altarpiece; and it is only after a close comparison that we recognize that the angel of the reliquary panel is somewhat lither and slimmer, and that his figure is a little better articulated. And it is to be noted that no angel just of this type is to be found in any of the four other "Annunciations" by the master. Almost as strong an affinity exists between the Virgin in the one picture and the Virgin in the other. In both the Madonna is represented seated in precisely the same attitude, with her hands crossed over her breast, and an open book upon her knee. [But here again we find that in the reliquary picture the figure is drawn with more knowledge and freedom.] In both we see a Virgin of a blonder type than is customary in the master's later works. In both she is represented with a very small mouth, a small chin, and almond-shaped eyes which in their form suggest the Trecento. In both, too, the closest affinity is revealed in the drawing of the drapery: the folds of the Virgin's cloak as it falls from her shoulders are almost identical in the two pictures. And here,

Ulnari, photo. Oratorio del Gesù, Cortona.

The Annunciation.

Giuan Electric Engraving Co.

Alinari photo.] [*Oratorio del Gesù, Cortona.*

THE ANGEL GABRIEL.

Detail from the Cortona Altar-piece.

Alinari photo.] [*Oratorio del Gesù, Cortona.*

THE VISITATION.

Part of the Predella of the Cortona Altar-piece.

again, such slight divergences as there are, tend to show that the reliquary panel was painted a little later than the altar-piece.

A careful study of its predella also leads to the conviction that the Cortona "Annunciation" is closely connected with the reliquary panels, and that it is one of the earliest of Fra Angelico's known works. On the predella are represented scenes from the life of the Virgin. In order not to weary the reader, we will take but one of these, the "Dormition of the Virgin," and compare it with other pictures in which the same scene is presented. We shall, it will be seen, be able with some certainty to place them in their proper order. We shall be able to trace a regular and systematic development through them all. And as of one of them we know the date when it was painted, we shall be able to fix approximately the dates of the rest. We shall obtain, too, an important clue to the date of another "Annunciation" of Fra Angelico's—that which is now in the gallery at Madrid.

There are four pictures, the subject of which is the "Dormition of the Virgin," which are attributed to Fra Angelico. One is this of the Cortona predella; another forms the lower portion of Lord Methuen's reliquary panel; another is a part of the predella of the Madrid "Annunciation"; and the fourth is the little picture in the Uffizi Gallery, which was bequeathed to Cosimo II. by the Marchese Botti in 1619.

In the Cortona picture there is little purpose shown in the grouping, as well as little variety in the attitude, of the figures. There is, too, but little attempt at characterization. Christ is not placed in the centre, but to the right of the picture, and is given no special prominence. The Virgin's figure,

though full of pathetic grace, is really ill-proportioned.

In Lord Methuen's reliquary panel some purpose is introduced into the grouping. Two of the apostles are represented as acting as attendant priests on St. Peter, who is reading the office; one of them has the aspersorio in his hand. Jesus stands in the centre of the picture, and somewhat prominently in front of a small group of his disciples. Four other disciples are engaged in placing in position the bier of the Virgin. Each personage is represented in some suitable attitude. The Virgin's figure is in much better proportion than in the Cortona predella, and her form is more clearly indicated under her long blue robe. Two candles, which in the earlier picture are placed in the background, here take a prominent place in the design.

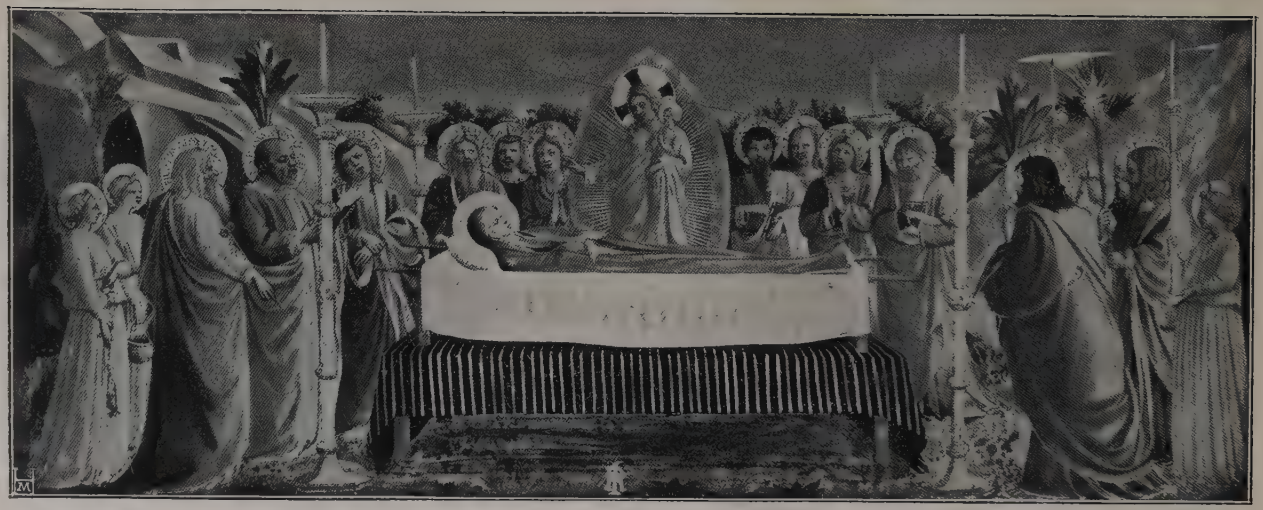
In the Madrid predella picture there is a further improvement in characterization and in grouping. The figure of Jesus is given yet more prominence and becomes the centre of the whole scene. His head stands out against a clear, evening sky. The entire picture is better composed and better spaced.

Finally, in the Uffizi panel the Christ, with a mandorla around Him, is represented as towering above the apostles. Four candles, instead of two, are placed above the Virgin's bier. Three attendant angels, one bearing a candle and another a thurible, take their places amongst the group of mourning disciples. Thus an attempt is made to render the whole scene more imposing, and, with this end, more space is given to the figures. Were the execution of this little panel equal to the composition, it would rank amongst the best of Fra Angelico's earlier pictures. But, unfortunately, as I have already stated, the actual painting of it was

Alinari photo.] [*Oratorio del Gesù, Cortona.*

THE DORMITION OF THE VIRGIN.

Part of the Predella of the Cortona Altar-piece.



Alinari photo.] [*Uffizi Gallery, Florence.*

THE DORMITION OF THE VIRGIN.

intrusted to a pupil, and, apart from its grouping and arrangement, there is little to commend in it. In drawing and modelling, as well as in characterization, it is much inferior to any of the others.

Now of one of these four presentations of the "Dormition of the Virgin" we know the approximate date, and that is the reliquary picture, the third of its series, which was probably painted, as I have shown, between 1425 and 1430. The Cortona picture, as we have just seen, must, from considerations of style, be assigned to an earlier date than this, and that at Madrid to a somewhat later date, whilst the Uffizi panel was painted last of all. In none of the pictures can we see any radical change of manner, any very marked advance. We can only trace a gradual and regular development. Obviously no very great difference of time divides the earliest of them from the latest. I have already given reasons for believing that the Cortona "Annunciation" itself was painted before the first of the reliquary panels. I conclude, therefore, that the whole work does not belong to a much earlier date than 1425.

There are, it must be admitted, two considerations of some importance which may be urged on behalf of the contention that the "Annunciation" of Cortona was painted in that city. In the first place, in the "Visitation" in the predella of this altar-piece there is a view of Lake Trasimene as seen from Cortona; and, secondly, it is an undoubted fact that, in nine cases out of every ten, every Italian picture still existing of an earlier date than 1450 was executed in the town where it was destined to remain. But even if this panel were painted at Cortona, we are not forced to the conclusion that it belongs to Fra Angelico's period of residence there.

In order to carry out this work, the friar may very well have received permission to revisit his old home, the place where he had spent his novitiate, a convent connected by so many ties with San Domenico of Fiesole. And all the evidence derived from the scientific study of Fra Angelico's early works themselves points to the conclusion that it was painted about the year 1424. I do not know of any existing work of the master that is of an earlier date than this, and in it the Dominican painter is shown to have been an innovator, and an innovator of a singularly robust type.

To make this clearer we will compare the Cortona "Annunciation" with another representation of the same subject, painted about the same time, which is, perhaps, the most beautiful altar-piece left to us of those executed in the eighty years that followed the death of Simone Martini—I mean that "Annunciation" by Lorenzo Monaco in the Santa Trinità at Florence, to which I have already alluded. Here we have the Camaldolese at his best. So long as a picture is regarded primarily as a decoration, so long as mere grace of pattern and glamour of colour-harmonies are regarded as important elements of decoration—so long will men not cease to take pleasure in this painting. And yet, if we place it side by side with Fra Angelico's "Annunciation," we see at once its inferiority. The Dominican's work is just as beautiful in colour and pattern as Lorenzo Monaco's, and it contains other great qualities in which the Trinità altar-piece is conspicuously lacking. In the first place, the fantastic beauty of the drapery, with which Lorenzo Monaco has clothed the angel and the Virgin, does not conceal from us the fact that neither figure has any real existence. On the other hand, Fra Angelico's Madonna, flat-

bosomed though she be, is drawn and modelled in such a way that he makes us feel for the moment that a body really exists under that rose-coloured robe. We realize the tension of it as she bends forward to receive the angelic message. And Gabriel, in spite of some faults of drawing, both lives and moves before us. His whole body is full of expression.

Or look at the architecture in the two pictures. In the Trinità altar-piece we see the usual faults of Giotto and his followers. The *loggia* is altogether too small in relation to the figures in the picture. Were the Virgin to rise from her seat, she would infallibly bump her head against the roof above her. In the Cortona "Annunciation," on the other hand, the architecture is of proper scale. Both Mary and the announcing angel could stand up under the *loggia*. The pillars, too, which support it are of proper thickness, in contrast to those in Lorenzo Monaco's panel, which are smaller in circumference than the Virgin's wrist. And with this greater regard for truth there is no sacrifice of beauty. In colour, in lineal pattern, in grouping, and pre-eminently in beauty and individuality of facial expression, the work of the younger artist is superior.

But in Fra Angelico's picture there are other manifestations of the new spirit that was beginning to show itself in art. The artist gives free expression to his delight in the natural world: he desires to make us share his joy. Outside of the *loggia* in which the Virgin sits is a garden—and such a garden!—full of the loveliest flowers—roses, red and white, and marguerites, and pinks, and jonquils, and orchids. It is obvious, and in one instance even too obvious, that before making his garden the friar had

made careful studies from nature. Of the red pink, he has given us the flower in three stages—in bud, half open, and full blown. Beautiful as it is, and delicately as it is painted, it has a little too much the air of a botanical illustration. But as we look at the painter's pleasaunce we soon forget this. Under the spell of his enchantment we follow him across that deep, flower-flecked grass to the cool shade of the orchard; full of a pleasant sense of the beauty of the world, and of God its maker.

In the predella the artist shows even more conclusively that he belongs to the new movement. The forms have a roundness and vitality which had been unknown in art since the days of Giotto; and, taken as a whole, his power of rendering form is not really inferior to that of his great compatriot. For, whilst the figures he paints may not in some particulars "appeal" so powerfully "to the tactile sense" as do the massive, broad-shouldered, and often hulking bodies of his predecessor, they are, on the whole, more satisfying, for the reason that they stand with their feet firmly pressed upon the earth. And, inasmuch as Giotto's noblest figures fail to do this, we feel instinctively that there is something radically wrong with them. We realize their bulk, but not their weight. Often, in fact, they remind us of nothing more than half-spent air-balloons bumping along the ground, but only touching it, never pressing down upon it.

How admirable, too, are the grouping and arrangement of these little pictures! How beautiful is their lineal design! In the "Marriage of the Virgin" note how effectively the artist has introduced the long trumpets in use in Florence in his own time. His pictures are full of such happy recollections of pageants, ecclesiastical and civil. Saint

as he was, he could not help seeing things pictorially, with a sense of their pictorial significance, and he had an excellent memory for the pictorial elements in the scenes that passed before him day by day.

But it is in his treatment of lineal and aerial perspective that he reveals most his sympathy with leaders of the new movement like Brunelleschi and Ghiberti. At Cortona he gives us the first of a long series of careful, unobtrusive studies of architecture. In the "Presentation," behind the personages represented, are two long rows of pillars seen in perspective. It is admirably done. The architecture of the building is beautiful in design, and is in proper scale in relation to the figures. Or take the "Marriage of the Virgin." Here again the artist has set himself certain problems in perspective which, with one curious exception, he has solved with a success entirely new in his own art. On the right of the picture, and immediately behind the group of maidens who attend upon Mary, is a house with a porch. On the left is a beautiful arcade running round two sides of a building. In each case the architecture is neither archaic nor fantastic. It is of the artist's own time, and is both carefully studied and finely drawn. Above the garden wall—the only ill-drawn object in the picture—we see trees against a distant sky. The whole composition is so admirably spaced that the artist communicates to us the sense of being in the open air on a fine day, with flowers blooming all about us, and gentle spring breezes fanning our cheeks.

Yet more remarkable is the success attained by this young innovator in the "Visitation," in the same predella. In this picture we find the earliest expression in Italian painting of that feeling for

landscape, so essentially modern, to which Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini was the first to give complete and definite expression. Here Fra Angelico, as we have already remarked, has rendered a scene from nature. He has painted Lake Trasimene as seen from Cortona, with the high tower of Castiglione del Lago, since destroyed, standing out against the evening sky. It is by no means the only representation of an actual landscape that is to be found in Fra Angelico's works; but it is the first, and this view, so striking in itself, so closely connected with his early enthusiasms, seems to have haunted his memory throughout his life. Moreover, although it is the earliest known attempt to portray an actual landscape, in reality it is far in advance of many more ambitious efforts of later artists. For here we have no mere bird's-eye view of the country, with the distant objects painted in the same tones as they should be were they near at hand: the landscape grows grayer and colder as it nears the horizon.

The sky above, too, is treated with just as fine an appreciation of space and distance. The sun has just set, the twilight is approaching, as Mary, bearing the Child in her womb, is met by Elizabeth at the gate of the little city, in the hill country of Juda. A deep blue above her, the firmament fades gradually away through most delicate and subtle gradations of tone, to a pale, pearly gray. The little clouds that streak it here and there are all introduced in such a way as to strengthen the general suggestion of spaciousness and tranquillity that pervades the picture. With the same end in view he introduces the city wall near at hand, with the dark ilexes above it, all standing out in strong relief against the distant vault of heaven. This symphony of nature, so full of quiet joy and deep content, is a

fitting accompaniment to the melody of the "Magnificat."

Fra Angelico, then, was the first Italian artist to make any serious attempt to solve certain problems of aerial perspective.[1] He was the first to endeavour to communicate to others the same kind of pleasure with which the contemplation of a landscape filled his own soul. He has succeeded in some measure in making us feel as he felt when on some evening in spring, with the Virgin's song ringing in his ears, he looked out across the hill country from the convent garden at Cortona.

Thus the friar, and his contemporaries, Hubert and John Van Eyck, are the fathers of modern landscape. Thus at Monte Egidio rose that little rivulet which—after being parted for a time into two streams, the one of which flowed through Florence and Milan, the other through Umbria—has in these latter days, with the help of other tributary waters, grown to so great a river. The blue distance in Baldovinetti's "Baptism" in the Academy, the evening sky in Verrocchio's "Annunciation," the mysterious landscape of the "Vierge aux Rochers"—all mark important stages in the course of one of its parted channels: Fra Angelico taught Baldovinetti, and Baldovinetti, Verrocchio, and Verrocchio was the master of Leonardo. The other channel flows through Gozzoli, Fiorenzo di Lorenzo, and Perugino to Raphael.

There are two other pictures by the friar which were painted early in his career and at a previous date to two at least of the reliquary panels: the one

[1] Uccello, of course, was very much concerned about lineal perspective, but he did not investigate at all the problems of aerial perspective to which I refer. In fact, he does not seem to have been aware of their existence.

is the Madonna of the Parma Gallery, the other the Louvre "Coronation." The Parma Madonna need not detain us long. It is not one of the happiest of Fra Angelico's tempera pictures, and there are critics who deny that it is an authentic work of the master. But to my mind its technical qualities alone justify Signor Cavalcaselle's attribution. In parts, of course, it has been repainted, but the heads of the Virgin and the Child have not been injured, and in them the friar's hand reveals itself.

The Madonna is of the same type as the Virgin in the Cortona "Annunciation." The Child, clad in a long rose-coloured robe, stands on her knee. His head is close to hers, and the golden tresses of mother and child mingle together. Below are four saints—St. John the Baptist, St. Dominic, St. Francis, and St. Paul. St. Dominic and St. Francis are in the centre. They clasp each other's hands and look into each other's eyes. Taking into consideration the fact (1) that the Virgin is of Fra Angelico's earliest type, with very fair hair and a small mouth and chin, (2) that the Child is fully clothed, (3) that the design of the picture is entirely Gothic in character, (4) that the picture is weaker in drawing than the later works of the master's first period, I am inclined to regard this Parma Madonna as one of the earliest of his existing panel-paintings.

The "Coronation" of the Louvre is a more important work. In spite of its lamentable condition, this painting is still capable of affording as much pleasure as almost any of Fra Angelico's early tempera pictures. It is full of passages of exquisite beauty. How natural, how inevitable is the gesture of St. Louis! He has just caught sight of his Lord in the act of placing the crown on the blessed Virgin's head. He is enraptured at the sight. Full of awe

Jules Hautecœur photo.] [*Louvre, Paris.*

THE CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN.

and reverent love, he falls on his knees, and wonders, and adores.

And on the opposite side what a beautiful group is that of St. Agnes and St. Catherine! They are amongst the earliest of a series of presentations of womanhood, the careful study of which will at once disabuse the mind of the student of the delusion that Fra Angelico did not know how to represent women—women who were truly human and womanly. This series, in addition to the above-named, includes such beautiful creations as the St. Mary Magdalene in the altar-piece of San Domenico at Cortona; the group of the three Maries at the sepulchre, in the San Marco fresco; the St. Mary and St. Martha in the "Agony in the Garden," in the same convent; the women who are listening to St. Stephen preaching, in the little Studio of Pope Nicholas; and the mother and child in the "San Lorenzo giving Alms," in the same chapel.

But a little observation will convince the student that this "Coronation" of the Louvre was painted at a time when the Dominican artist was entirely under Gothic influences, and therefore before 1430. The chief architectural feature in the picture is the Gothic canopy under which the two principal personages are seated. It is hexagonal in form, and is copied from one of the earlier tabernacles of Or San Michele—the tabernacle of the Medici e Speziali—which was completed in 1399. The steps in front of the throne are planned in the shape of half a hexagon, and in their main outlines harmonize with the outer half of the canopy above them. All the main lines of the composition meet in the apex of the canopy. And this structure determines and dominates the whole composition of the picture.

But again, it is not only on account of the Gothic

features of the design that we must assign this picture to an early date. If we come to details of style, we find still more powerful reasons for placing it amongst the first in a chronological list of Fra Angelico's works. Some of the principal figures, that of St. Nicholas of Myra, for instance, have all the virtues and vices of miniature painting. The master had not yet attained to the freedom and grace that we find in Lord Methuen's reliquary panel; and he was yet very far from possessing the consummate powers which mark the artist of the Uffizi "Coronation."

Take, for instance, the attendant angels in this Louvre altar-piece, and compare them with those in Lord Methuen's picture. When placed side by side, we at once see that those in the former painting are wanting in the grace and lightness of the celestial choir of the beautiful little "Assumption." Here, in fact, throughout the whole picture, the lineal design seems stiff and formal when contrasted with the lyric grace of the smaller panel. And it is not merely in charm of pattern that the difference lies. In other respects, and notably in the rendering of movement, Lord Methuen's panel is superior. It would seem, then, that the Louvre "Coronation" must have been painted at Fiesole shortly before the later reliquary panels, and some years before the "Coronation" of the Uffizi, that is to say, about the year 1425.

At the Uffizi is another representation of the same subject. In it the artist cuts himself loose from Giottesque traditions. He gives the world an entirely new conception of the scene. Renouncing the Gothic throne and tabernacle, emancipating himself from Gothic influences, he places his glorious circlet of blessed personages in mid-air, above

the clouds, in front of a glowing background of golden rays. Above, on the left, is the Virgin, her face full of sweetness and content. With her hands crossed over her breast, she bends forward a little, as the Christ, who is seated opposite to her, places in her crown a jewel set in gold. To the right hand and to the left is a choir of angels singing and playing on musical instruments. Once again the artist has introduced the long Florentine trumpets with admirable effect. On either hand, below, are grouped, so as almost to complete the circle, fifty saints male and female. The heads are full of character. In some cases the artist has reproduced faces which are to be found in the earlier Louvre altar-piece, but with added strength and subtlety of delineation. Here Fra Angelico's power of harmonious and rhythmical composition is seen at its best. This picture of the "Coronation" is like some glorious crown of coloured gems floating in the empyrean.

It is not very difficult to arrive at a conclusion as to the period when it first saw the light. It has affinities with the "Coronation" of the Louvre and with Lord Methuen's panel which was probably painted in 1429, but it is of a later date than either. Its kinship with the reliquary picture is very close. The angels in the one picture are intimately related to the angels in the other. For an example take the angel next to Christ, on His left, in the Uffizi "Coronation," and compare it with the angel to the right of the Virgin in the "Assumption." We see at once that the former is an improved copy of the latter. In the treatment of the hair and of the drapery, and in the general pose of the figure, the similarity is very pronounced. But, whilst the Uffizi picture is clearly related to the best of the

reliquary panels, it is obviously superior to it in every respect. This beautiful "Coronation," in fact, is the last[1] and the greatest of the friar's glorified miniatures.

There are yet remaining two pictures belonging to this period which deserve some detailed notice. Pre-eminent amongst these is the "Last Judgment," now in the Academy at Florence, which Fra Angelico painted for Sta. Maria degli Angeli, the convent of Lorenzo Monaco and Ambrogio Traversari, where, perhaps, the friar himself had studied miniature painting when a youth. This picture is related to the "Coronation" of the Uffizi, and was painted but a little while before it. The artist, whose conception both of the Christ and of the Madonna varied considerably at different periods of his career, has given to each the same features in the one picture as in the other. And there are other similar repetitions. But it is in the technique of the two paintings, more than in resemblances of this kind, that the bond between them is closer, if less obvious.

In this "Last Judgment" of the Academy, Christ is represented seated, in a mandorla, round which are eight cherubim, and, outside of these, a double circle of seraphim. Below, an angel bears the cross, and two other angels sound a trumpet of doom. Immediately to the right and left of Our Lord sit the blessed Virgin and St. John the Baptist, and beyond them, on either hand, are two rows of saints and apostles, the assessors of the eternal Judge, at the last Assize. Below all, in the centre, is a cemetery with the graves open. On

[1] I am leaving out of account here predella pictures such as that in our own National Gallery, which was painted, we shall see, a little later than the Uffizi "Coronation."

the one side of it is the throng of the blessed, whom angels are leading towards the city of God. On the other side are bishops and kings, monks and nuns, whom devils are thrusting down to hell. To the extreme right of the Judge are the gates of the New Jerusalem; to the extreme left, the seven circles of the Inferno. But between the groups of the blessed still listening to the divine sentence and the celestial portals is a space full of grass and flowers, where is taking place the "ballo dei angeli." Angels, hand in hand, are dancing in solemn measure on the flower-strewn grass. Those are right, no doubt, who have said that this incident in the picture was inspired by that hymn attributed to Jacopone da Todi, so full of *naïve* beauty, which describes the angels' dance:

"Una rota si fa in cielo
Di tutti i Santi in quel giardino,
Là ove sta l' amor divino
Che s' infiamma de l' amore.

"In quella rota vanno i Santi
Et li angiol' tutti quanti;
A quel Sposo van davanti:
Tutti danzan per amore.

"In quella corte è un' alegreza
D' un amor dismisuranza:
Tutti vanno ad una danza
Per amor del Salvatore.

"Son vestiti di vergato,
Bianco, rosso e frammezzato:
Le ghirlande in mezzo el capo:
Ben mi pareno amatori.

"Tutti quanti con ghirlandi,
Paren giovin' de trent' anni:

Quella corte se rinfranchi,
Ogni cosa è piena d' amore."[1]

This picture, whilst it illustrates well Fra Angelico's early manner, is attractive rather because of certain charming passages in it than because of the general grandeur of the conception. The whole composition is stiff and formal to the last degree. The master is still banefully affected by Gothic influences, and he has not rid himself of the limitations of the miniaturist. The central figure, too, is singularly disappointing. The artist, indeed, will have to

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[1] "Dance they in a ring in heaven,
All the Blessed in that garden,
Where the love divine abideth,
Which is all aglow with love.

"In that ring dance all the Blessed,
In that ring dance all the angels.
Go they all before the Bridegroom,
Dancing all of them for love.

"In that court is joyfulness
Of a love that's fathomless.
All of them go to the dancing,
For the Saviour whom they love.

"Clad are they in coloured raiment,
White and red and variegated.
Crowned they are with wreaths of flowers.
Like to lovers are they all.

"All of those thus crowned with garlands
Look like youths of thirty summers.
In that court is life abundant,
Everything is full of love."

To those who do not understand Italian it is impossible, for me at least, to give any idea of the beauty of the original verses. No one could realize more keenly than the translator himself does, how miserably he has failed in his effort to render them into English.

Ad. Braun et Cie. photo.] [*Chantilly Collection.*

STUDIES FOR "THE LAST JUDGMENT."

travel a long way before he can create anything so noble as the transfigured Jesus of San Marco. As for the hell, it appears feeble and childish when we compare it with the great "Inferno" of the Pisan Campo Santo. Later on Fra Angelico will paint with force and conviction even a scene of horror and cruelty. But at present he seems quite incapable of doing so with any effectiveness.

Of the works of Fra Angelico's first period there remains only one other that demands notice, and that is the Madrid "Annunciation." In treating of Fra Angelico's four representations of the "Dormition of the Virgin," one of which is to be found in the predella of this picture, we have already given reasons for believing that it is decidedly later in date than either the "Annunciation" of Cortona or Lord Methuen's panel. And if we raise our eyes from the predella to examine the altar-piece itself, this conviction is considerably strengthened. The whole picture, we observe, is better spaced than the Gesù altar-piece: the drawing, and especially the drawing of the architecture, discloses greater freedom and knowledge; and the modelling of the two principal figures is much stronger in the "Annunciation" of Madrid than in that of Cortona. But at the same time the design is full of pronounced Trecento features. Indeed the face of the Virgin, with its sad, drooping eyes, and highly-arched eyebrows, would, if taken by itself, seem to indicate retrogression rather than advance. It has about it something almost Byzantine.

But there is another feature in the composition which supports the contention that this work belongs to a later period than the Cortona picture. In the spandrels of the arches of the *loggia* are medallions like those we meet with in the works of Brunelleschi,

which that architect borrowed from the Temple of Vesta at Tivoli.

Taking all these facts into consideration, we conclude that this picture was painted at a time when the artist was yet under Gothic influences, but when he had already commenced to study the new architecture. Now the earliest instances of classical details in works executed by Fra Angelico himself or in his school are to be found in the little panel of the "Coronation of the Virgin," the date of which is about 1430, and the "Martyrdom of St. Mark," a predella picture of the Madonna dei Linajuoli, the date of which is 1433. It would seem, then, that the Madrid "Annunciation" was painted in the closing years of the master's first period.[1]

We have now passed in review all of the more important works which belong to Fra Angelico's first period,[2] his Gothic period, the period when he still retained in a considerable measure many of the qualities of the miniaturists. The "Coronation" of the Uffizi was, as we have said, the greatest and the last of his glorified miniatures. In that particular form of art he could go no farther. He had brought it as near to perfection as was possible. To continue to progress, he must take a somewhat different

[1] In the year 1432, Fra Angelico painted an "Annunciation" for the convent of Sant' Alessandro at Brescia (see Doc. I., p. 182). It is needless to say that the "Annunciation" now at Brescia which has been attributed to him is not by his hand.

[2] It is no doubt remarkable that, whilst so many works of Fra Angelico's later years have come down to us, there are none existing which can be assigned to an earlier date than 1423, when the friar was thirty-six years of age. But it must be borne in mind: (1) that the reformed Dominicans of Fiesole led a wandering life from 1409 to 1418, a life not at all conducive to the production of works of art; (2) that during that period a great part of Fra Angelico's time must have been devoted to study and meditation in accordance with Dominici's counsels to the younger

direction. And this he did. Under the influence of Masaccio and Michelozzo his art takes a higher range.

brethren; and (3) that the works by Fra Angelico at Sta. Maria Novella, executed, according to Antonio Billi, "when he was a young man"—that is, either in 1406-7 or between 1418 and 1423—have perished, as well as the picture that he painted for the hospital of Sta. Maria Nuova in the latter year. I do not, however, attach very much importance to considerations of this kind. The application of scientific methods of criticism to all Fra Angelico's works leads to but one conclusion, and too much weight must not be allowed to mere *a priori* objections to it.

CHAPTER III

SECOND FIESOLAN PERIOD

THE second period of Fra Angelico's artistic career was, as I have said, pre-eminently a period of transition. At its commencement, he began to be affected more powerfully than he had ever been before by the great art movement of his time. And his works of this period can only be properly understood by those who have an accurate knowledge of the history of that movement. As was natural, it was in architecture and sculpture that the new life first began to show itself, and for a time painting lagged behind. Masaccio, himself trained in the *botteghe* of the sculptors, was in his own art as a voice crying in the wilderness; and, beyond the frescoes of the Brancacci Chapel, few paintings of the highest rank saw the light during the first three decades of the Quattrocento.

The leaders of the new movement were men of such commanding personality that their influence was powerfully felt in other arts than their own. In fact, it was architects and sculptors like Brunelleschi and Ghiberti, Donatello and Michelozzo, who really determined what direction the painters should take, who imposed upon them their own aims and ideals. And the Florentine school of painting never recovered from the effects of its early schooling. Just as Tuscan sculpture is too picturesque, so Florentine painting is too sculpturesque. Under the influence

of the sculptors, the painters made the rendering of form their chief artistic aim.[1] Under the influence of the architects they became very eager about the solving of problems of perspective. And to the last the school of Florence, speaking generally, remained true to the ideals with which it was thus inspired.

It was in or about the year 1433 that Fra Angelico began to take a more and more decisive position as a pioneer of the new movement in painting. In the years that followed he rid himself entirely of the influence of the miniaturists; he renounced, too, Gothic forms. His studies in the Brancacci Chapel not only added directly to his knowledge of form and perspective, but also helped him to understand, and to make pictorial use of, the teachings of the sculptors and the architects. But whilst second to none in his enthusiasm for the primary objects of the new movement, he did not allow it to diminish his own love for beautiful harmonious colour, or to weaken his own exigent sense of pictorial significance. His study of form never led him to become a mere scientific illustrator. On this point and that his knowledge may not have been as great as some of the Naturalists who were his contemporaries, but he was infinitely more of an artist. His exquisite taste, his well-balanced, artistic judgment, saved him from such grave faults as mar the work of Andrea del Castagno.

During this, his second period, Fra Angelico painted four great Madonnas: the Madonna dei Linajuoli, the Madonna of Cortona, the Madonna d'Annalena, and the Madonna of Perugia. We

[1] I say their chief artistic aim. Unfortunately for their art, Florentine painters often put, in the first place, aims which were not artistic.

will examine each of these pictures, show by comparison their intimate connection with each other, and trace in them the development of the artist's powers.

Fra Giovanni was commissioned to paint the Madonna dei Linajuoli[1] in 1433 by the guild of the flax-workers, who also arranged with Ghiberti to design a frame for it. The tabernacle was "to be painted inside and outside with colours, with gold and with silver the best that could be found," and "for all his trouble and work of hand" the artist was to receive one hundred and eighty florins of gold, or less "according to his conscience."

In this picture the blessed Virgin is represented seated upon a throne covered with rich brocade. She is wearing a blue robe and a rose tunic. With her left hand she holds the child, who is standing on her lap. He is clothed in a long garment, bearing a globe in his left hand, whilst the right is raised in blessing. Surrounding the Virgin, painted upon the bevelled border of the central panel, are twelve angels playing on musical instruments. On the doors are, on the inside, St. John and St. Matthew; on the outside, St. Peter and St. Mark.

In the predella three scenes are represented: the "Adoration of the Magi," the "Preaching of St. Peter," and the "Martyrdom of St. Mark."

The Madonna of Cortona is still in its place in the chapel to the south of the high altar in the church of San Domenico in that city. There is reason to believe that it was painted by the order of a certain Niccolò di Angiolo,[2] who was a great benefactor to the convent, and to whose son, Michelangiolo, the friars ceded this chapel in recognition of his own and

[1] See Doc. II., p. 182. [2] See Doc. III., p. 183.

inari photo.]

[*Uffizi Gallery, Florence.*

THE MADONNA DEI LINAJUOLI.

Alinari photo.] [*Uffizi, Florence.*

AN ANGEL.

Detail from the Madonna dei Linajuoli.

Alinari photo.] [*Uffizi Gallery, Florence.*

THE PREACHING OF ST. PETER.

Part of the Predella of the Madonna dei Linajuoli.

Alinari photo.] [*San Domenico, Cortona.*

THE MADONNA OF CORTONA.

his father's gifts to their church. It is the only altar-piece by Fra Angelico that has been left actually in the chapel for which it was painted. And its predella has been separated from it and removed to the Oratorio del Gesù at the other end of Cortona.

It has a Gothic frame, which is divided into three compartments. In the central panel is the Virgin and Child. Each of the side panels is divided by two pointed arches, and under each arch is a saint. On the left of the Madonna are St. John the Evangelist and St. Mary Magdalene; on her right, St. John the Baptist and St. Matthew. She is seated under a canopy transitional in style, the frieze of which is ornamented with festoons; and on either side of her two angels stand. She is wearing a blue robe lined with green and a rose tunic. Her face resembles that of the Madonna dei Linajuoli, but it is a little softer and rounder and fairer, with something more of maternal tenderness in it. The infant, entirely naked above the waist, is standing on her knee in much the same attitude as the child-Christ of the Uffizi altar-piece. In his left hand he bears a rose. At the foot of the daïs, on either hand, is a golden vase full of roses red and white. On the frame, above the Virgin, is a Crucifixion, and in the medallions on either side of it is represented the "Annunciation."

The Madonna d'Annalena is now in the Florence Academy. The convent of Annalena, to which it originally belonged, was not founded until 1453, and that was not the first destination of the picture. It was probably painted for some private chapel of the Medici, as it was given to the convent by Anna Helena Malatesta, a *protégée* of Cosimo *Pater Patriae*, who had been brought up in the house of Attilio di Vieri de' Medici.

In this picture the Virgin is represented enthroned under a Renaissance canopy, the frieze and cornice of which are continued, at a somewhat lower level, above the wall on either side of the throne. In front of the lower part of this wall a brocade is hung, which forms a background to the two groups of saints standing to the left and right of the Madonna. She looks down at the Child, who is seated on her left arm. He has a pomegranate in the one hand; with the other He holds the border of his mother's robe near to where it is clasped above her bosom. He much resembles the Child in the Cortona altar-piece. The saints on either side of the throne are St. Matthew, St. Laurence, and St. Francis; St. Dominic, St. Cosmo, and St. Damian.

The fourth great Madonna of this period was painted for the church of San Domenico at Perugia, and is, at the present time, in the Pinacoteca Vannucci in that city. It is in a sadly ruined condition, but it is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful of Fra Angelico's altar-pieces. And though in a Gothic framework,[1] it belongs almost entirely to the Renaissance. The Virgin is seated under a characteristic Renaissance canopy which bears the stamp of Michelozzo's growing influence. The arch of it is set between two pilasters, and is crowned by an entablature, the frieze of which is adorned with festoons quite in the style of Donatello's great *compagno* Michelozzo. The Madonna regards the baby with motherly solicitude. He is standing on her lap and leaning against her arm. In his left hand he holds a pomegranate; his right is raised in blessing. His face differs very much from that in all preceding pre-

[1] Perhaps in this case, as in that of the Madonna dei Linajuoli, the frame of the picture was made at the order of those who commissioned the picture.

i photo.] [*Academy, Florence.*

THE MADONNA OF ANNALENA.

Alinari, photo. Pinacoteca, Perugia

The Madonna of Perugia.

Swan Electric Engraving Co.

Alinari photo.] [*Pinacoteca, Perugia.*

TWO ANGELS.

Detail from the Madonna of Perugia.

sentations of the holy Child by this master. It is more beautiful, rounder, more infantile. The same type is reproduced in other later pictures, as in the well-known fresco of the "Madonna and Saints" in the upper corridor at San Marco.

On either side of the throne are two angels, bearing roses red and white in flat baskets, just like those which are sold to-day in the market-place at Cortona. Below the daïs stand three vases, also full of roses. St. John and St. Catherine are to the right of the Madonna; to the left are St. Dominic and St. Nicholas. In the framework of the picture were introduced several small figures of saints, now much damaged; whilst in the arches above was represented the Annunciation, and, no doubt, also the Crucifixion, as in the Cortona altar-piece. The two medallions of the "Annunciation" still remain.

On the predella, now broken up and dispersed, was told the story of the life of St. Nicholas of Bari. Two of the little pictures which formed a part of it are at the Vatican; three others are with the remaining sections of the altar-piece at Perugia.

These four great altar-pieces, then—that is to say, the Madonna dei Linajuoli, the Madonna of Cortona, the Madonna d'Annalena, and the Madonna of Perugia—are closely connected with each other. They mark a period of rapid development in the art of the Dominican painter. The first of them, the Madonna dei Linajuoli, has to a peculiar degree the characteristics of a picture of transition. In it we find examples both of the manner the artist was forsaking and the manner that he was then forming. In the figures upon the frame we see the enlarged miniature at its worst. For almost the last time, Fra Angelico essayed to paint beautiful angels on a gold

ground. The result was of such a character as might naturally have disgusted him with that kind of work. It resembles nothing more than the repetition by a preacher of some theme which once he has felt very deeply, but which in course of time ceased to be of so absorbing an interest to him, which, in fact, he has outgrown a little in the course of years. His whole treatment of these angels shows a kind of facility; but, as we have already pointed out, they are altogether lacking in the subtler qualities of great figure painting.

On the other hand, in the four saints on the doors of the triptych is manifest the influence both of Masaccio and Ghiberti. These massive, well-modelled figures mark a new departure in the artist's life. But good and promising as the workmanship is, the contemplation of them leaves us cold. The painter has taken infinite pains to repeat the lessons he has learned in the Brancacci Chapel and at Or San Michele; but his whole work is academic, and lacking in force, spontaneity, and individuality. The truth of the matter is that in 1433 Fra Angelico was not yet at home in his new manner, and could not as yet express himself completely in it. We see in the other pictures of the series how soon after that date he was able to use like a master all the new knowledge that he had gained.

But to come to more detailed reasons for placing these four great altar-pieces in the above order and for assigning them to the same period.

We find, first of all, a distinct relationship, and at the same time a regular development in the drawing and modelling of the figures in them. To the end that we may make this clear, let us take one saint, St. John the Baptist, who appears in three of them, and compare the different presentations of him.

Alinari photo.] [*Pinacoteca, Perugia.*

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST AND ST. CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA.

Part of the Perugia Altar-piece.

In the Madonna dei Linajuoli the form of the saint is stiff and unarticulated, and without charm. The drapery, too, is very uninteresting in design. The right arm is particularly wooden, and is in a conventional position similar to that given to it in several old Sienese [1] and Giottesque pictures. The artist is at the commencement of a period of transition. He cannot as yet impart to his large figures the grace that we find in his smaller miniature-like works.

In the Cortona altar-piece the friar has endeavoured to alter this by changing the position of the arm and by giving the Baptist a scroll to hold. The effect is certainly more natural. Moreover, in the same picture we see an improvement in the modelling of the face and in the drawing of the left hand and arm. The pose of the whole figure, too, is less constrained, the drapery of better design.

But it is at Perugia that we find the greatest change. Amongst all the beautiful figures that Fra Angelico has left us, few are more beautiful than his St. John the Baptist there. The attractive face, with its fine brown eyes, is exquisitely modelled. The hands, too, are full of expression. And how firmly the legs of this young ascetic are planted upon the ground! Truly, in Fra Angelico's imagination, the feet of him that brought good tidings were beautiful upon the mountains. Possessed by the artist's presentation of him, we wonder little that "there went out to him all the land of Juda."

[1] There is a somewhat close resemblance between the St. John the Baptist in this picture and a representation of the same saint by Taddeo di Bartoli at the Osservanza, near Siena, which forms part of a polyptych, the date of which is 1413. The likeness is strong enough to suggest that Fra Angelico had actually seen the picture. Amongst other points of resemblance is to be noted that for the saint's cloak a certain shade of violet is used which is very rarely found in pictures of this period.

We see, also, at once a strong family resemblance, and a gradual development, in the drawing and modelling of the evangelist, whom in three of the pictures—the Madonna dei Linajuoli, the Madonna of Cortona, and the Madonna d'Annalena—the artist has placed at the Virgin's left hand. In these three figures, in fact, we can trace just the same kind of progress that we have observed in the representations of St. John the Baptist; and a careful comparison of the St. Mark in the Uffizi picture, the St. John the Evangelist at Cortona, and the St. Matthew of the Madonna d'Annalena, reveals to us that, in every detail, the St. Mark of the Madonna dei Linajuoli is inferior to the other two.

But there are stronger arguments than these for placing the pictures in the above order. We have said that Fra Angelico, like all the painters of his time, owed a great deal to the sculptors and architects. Now if we go to the Madonnas of the sculptors of the period, to the works of Jacopo della Quercia, Donatello, and Luca della Robbia, we shall find certain gradual and characteristic developments in all of them. First of all, the mother becomes more truly maternal. Then the Child, which in the first quarter of the century is still represented as wholly clothed, afterwards is shown to us but partially covered, and later still, after 1435,[1] he is represented more and more frequently as entirely nude.

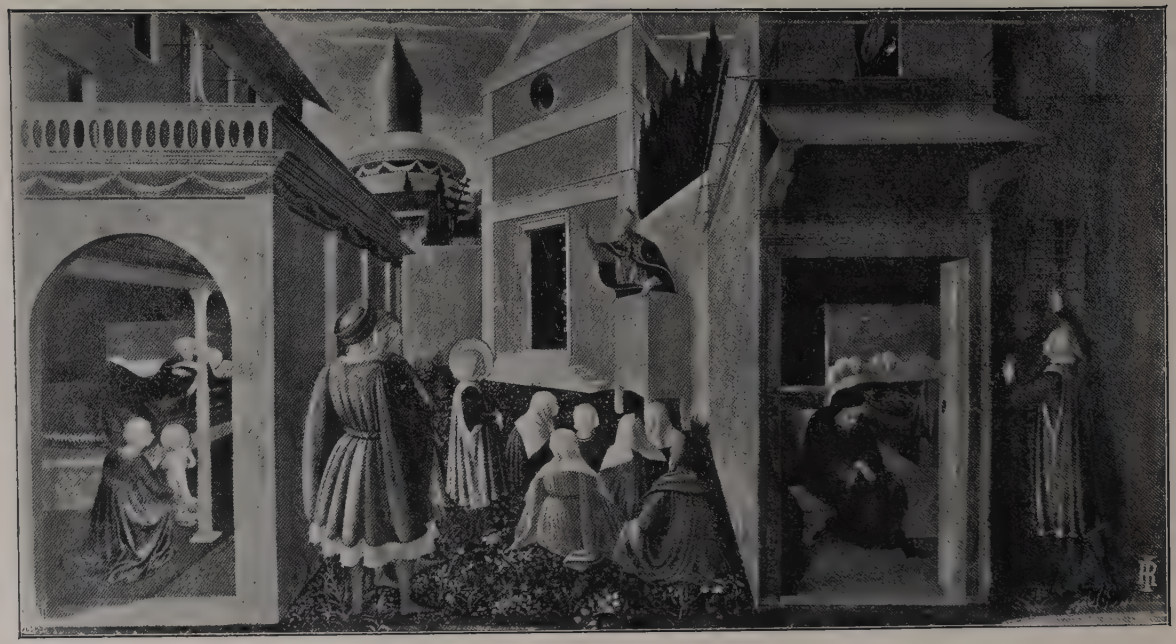
The maternal idea first shows itself strongly in the works of Donatello towards the close of his

[1] I venture to think that M. Reymond has shown conclusively that the Drury-Fortnum Madonna now at Oxford, dated 1428 and attributed to Luca della Robbia—a work which I had long regarded with suspicion—is neither of that date nor by that master, but is a clever forgery of some later age.

Alinari photo.] [*Pinacoteca, Perugia.*

ST. DOMINIC AND ST. NICHOLAS OF BARI.

Part of the Perugia Altar-piece.



Alinari photo.] [*Vatican, Rome*

THE VISION OF ST. NICHOLAS OF BARI, AND THE PREACHING OF ST. NICHOLAS.

Part of the Predella of the Madonna of Perugia.

second period. The earliest example of its passionate presentation, perhaps, is to be found in the Madonna which decorates the tympanum of the tomb of John XXIII., finished in 1427; though it had been rudely foreshadowed in some of the works of those obscure workers in terra-cotta who had flourished in Italy before that date. Afterwards we can trace the gradual growth of this idea through the works of Luca della Robbia. The Madonnas of his middle and later periods are full of a wonderful tenderness, most sweet, most poignant.

In the same way, in representations of the holy Child, little by little the infantile form is more fully revealed. The earliest examples of nude children in Tuscan sculpture are the infants on the pedestal of the tomb of Ilaria del Carretto in the cathedral at Lucca. This tomb was executed about 1406.[1] But Jacopo della Quercia, bold innovator as he was, did not venture to represent the infant Christ nude until thirty years later, and it is the rarest thing in the world to find a nude representation of the holy Child in sculpture before 1435. In painting, I do not know of one example of an earlier date than that; although it is true that in Fra Angelico's two early representations of the "Adoration of the Magi"—I refer to that in the Cortona predella, and to the earliest of the reliquary panels at San Marco—the Child is almost nude, that is, with but a gossamer veil around him.

The development of these two ideas—that is to say, the maternalness of the mother and the childishness of the child—can be traced most clearly in the

[1] M. Ridolfi, "L'Arte in Lucca studiata nella sua Cattedrale," p. 110; C. Cornelius, "Jacopo della Quercia," pp. 65-71; M. Reymond, "La Sculpture Florentine, première moitié du XVme siècle," p. 35.

Madonnas of Jacopo della Quercia. In the earliest Madonna by this artist of which the date is known, the "Madonna di Ferrara"[1] (1408), the Virgin does not look at the Child, and shows no maternal solicitude or tenderness. She sits as a queen, dignified, regal, impassive; the Child, fully clothed, stands on her knee. Neither the infant Christ nor His mother show any signs of affection for each other.

In the Madonna of San Frediano[2] the Child is much closer to the mother. He is seated at ease on her left arm, whilst his right arm rests above her bosom.

In the Madonna of the Fonte Gaja, the mother looks at the Child, who again is seated on her left arm. She holds him lovingly, whilst he catches hold of her veil.

In the Madonna of Bologna, executed towards the close of the artist's life in 1438, the idea of maternity is beautifully emphasized. The Child, entirely nude, leans against the mother's bosom. She draws him to her with motherly tenderness. Her whole attitude and bearing suggest the idea of maternity.

Now we can trace exactly the same developments in Fra Angelico's work. Let us take first the gradual growth of the maternal ideal. In the Ma-

[1] On this work is the inscription "Jacopo da Siena," and it was always regarded as a work of Jacopo della Quercia, until Herr Cornelius, in his excellent monograph on that artist, showed some reason for doubting its authenticity. Herr Cornelius's arguments are not without weight, but on the whole I am disposed to agree with M. Marcel Reymond that it is by Jacopo della Quercia. (M. Reymond, *op. cit.*, pp. 33, 35.)

[2] Herr Carl Cornelius considers this Madonna to be of about the year 1413. The inscription which relates that Jacopo finished the work in 1422 he regards as applying to the predella, which is obviously of a much later date than the retable.

donna dei Linajuoli the Virgin is cold and dignified. The Child stands erect upon her knee; she gives him but little support. He is fully clothed, and the expression that he wears is not very infantile.

In the Madonna of Cortona the Virgin wears a softer and tenderer air. She gives the Child a little more support. He is naked above the waist, and the little body is more carefully modelled. The artist does not yet, however, show in the expression of the face and the contour of the limbs that peculiar knowledge of babyhood which characterized his later works.

In the Madonna d'Annalena we see a further development. The mother looks lovingly at the Child, who is seated on her left arm. In this picture, too, he is half naked, and in other respects closely resembles the representation of the infant Jesus in the Cortona picture.

In the Madonna of Perugia we find the mother again regarding her little son with tenderness as he leans against her left arm and side. And in this picture he is represented almost entirely naked, wearing nothing but a narrow, transparent veil of gossamer texture drawn across his loins. Moreover, here we have a real baby, with rounded limbs and a sweet infantile expression.[1] The whole conception of the mother and the child has thus, we see, become gradually more human and intimate.

But the influence of the sculptors and architects is not only to be seen in the principal figures of

[1] A remarkable presentation of the Divine Child, standing erect and entirely nude, is to be seen in one of the predella pictures of this altar-piece, in that wherein is represented the Vision of St. Nicholas of Bari.

these four great Madonnas, but even more distinctly in the accessories, in the architectural surroundings in which the artist places his figures.

At the very commencement of this period Fra Angelico showed himself to be an innovator in a very remarkable way. In the predella of the Madonna dei Linajuoli, in the "Martyrdom of St. Mark," he not only represents Corinthian pilasters, he also introduces into his work four Ionic capitals. Here we have an innovation of a most pronounced kind.

The earliest Ionic capitals of the Renaissance are, according to Herr von Fabriczy, those which are now to be seen in the tabernacle of Or San Michele, where stands to-day Verrocchio's group of Christ and St. Thomas. According to the same high authority, this tabernacle is identical with that which Donatello was commissioned to make for the same spot by the Parte Guelfa, and which was certainly completed in 1425.[1] There is no documentary evidence to prove that Michelozzo was associated with Donatello before that date, although we find him working as his *compagno* almost immediately after it.[2] Nevertheless, because of considerations of style which I cannot here enter into, I am convinced that the tabernacle is entirely by the hand of the younger artist, and that Donatello merely executed the statue of St. Louis which formerly stood under it. These are the only Ionic capitals that we

[1] Herr von Fabriczy has discovered a document which shows that the statue of St. Louis by Donatello, which was designed for this niche and originally stood there, was in its place in 1425. This document is to be published in the "Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft." See also Franceschini, "L'Oratorio di San Michele in Orto," pp. 87-90.

[2] Gaye, "Carteggio," vol. i., pp. 117, 118.

Alinari photo.] [*Uffizi Gallery, Florence.*

THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. MARK.

Part of the Predella of the Madonna dei Linajuoli.

know of that were in existence before 1433[1]; but there may have been others in Florence of an earlier date which have since perished.

Of course it is possible that Fra Angelico, not on his own initiative but in his first enthusiasm for the new movement in architecture, may have taken his Ionic capitals direct from San Giovanni. It is at least worthy of notice that in this predella they are found in close proximity to Corinthian pilasters as they are in the Florentine Baptistery, and that the architrave in this picture is similar to that of the Baptistery. But it is more probable that he obtained his inspiration direct from the tabernacle at Or San Michele, or from some other work of Michelozzo now destroyed.

But these classical details in the predella of the Madonna dei Linajuoli are insignificant when compared with the architectural backgrounds of the other three great altar-pieces of this series: they are only of any importance as being the first examples of the use of such forms in paintings of the Quattrocento.[2] In the Madonnas of Cortona, Annalena, and Perugia, the influence of the new movement is much more obvious; and a careful study of them will help us in our effort to fix approximately the date of these pictures.

In all of them the Madonna is represented seated

[1] Those on the gallery inside the dome of the Florence cathedral are, I think, the next in date, and they were followed by the capitals in the south cloister of the Innocenti (1437-8). In a "sgraffito" of the pavement of the Duomo at Siena, designed by Domenico di Bartolo in 1434, the Emperor Sigismund is represented sitting under an ornate classical canopy which is supported by Ionic columns.

[2] The Renaissance architecture in the fresco of "The Healing of the King's Son" in the Brancacci Chapel is, of course, the work of Filippino Lippi.

under a canopy. And in the three canopies we can trace a gradual progression from a style half Gothic, half classical, to pure Renaissance forms.

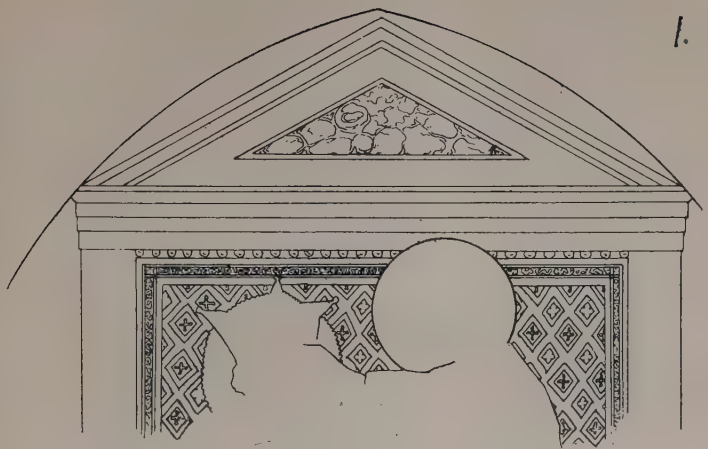
At Cortona the frieze and cornice are of a characteristic Renaissance type. But the round arch is set between Gothic twisted pillars such as are to be seen in some of the earlier tabernacles at Or San Michele.

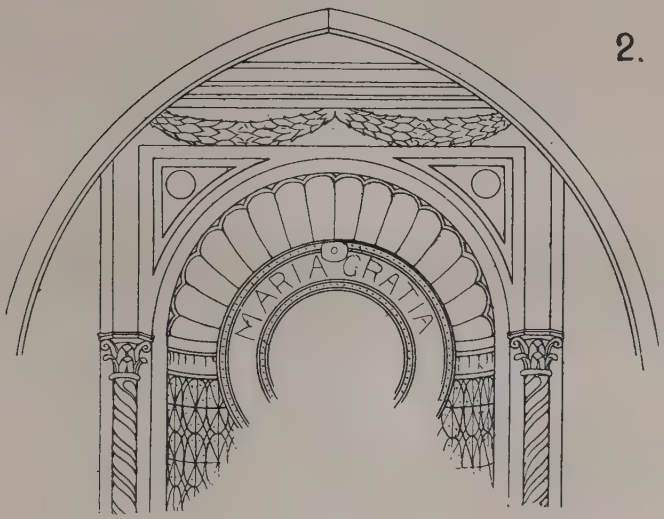
In the Madonna d'Annalena the Gothic pillars have disappeared. In the treatment of the niche, the cornice, and the frieze, the design resembles that of the tabernacle of the Madonna of Cortona. But in all these details we see improvement, and throughout the picture we find a bolder treatment of classical forms. As yet, however, the entablature is incomplete. It has frieze and cornice, but no architrave.

At Perugia the canopy is of a purely Renaissance character, and the entablature, now completed by the introduction of an architrave, is supported by fluted pilasters. The festoons on the frieze are treated in a severer, more classical manner.

Now although these three canopies are different in many respects, as must always be the case in works executed in a period of rapid transition, they have one very prominent feature which is common to them, and gives us a distinct clue as to their date and origin. In all of them the frieze is decorated with festoons. Now the first example of the use of a frieze adorned with festoons in the architecture of the Renaissance is that of the tabernacle at Or San Michele, to which I have just alluded, under which now stands Verrocchio's Christ and St. Thomas. That was, I believe, the work of Michelozzo, and was finished in 1425. The second example of such a frieze [1] is to be found in the beautiful portal of the

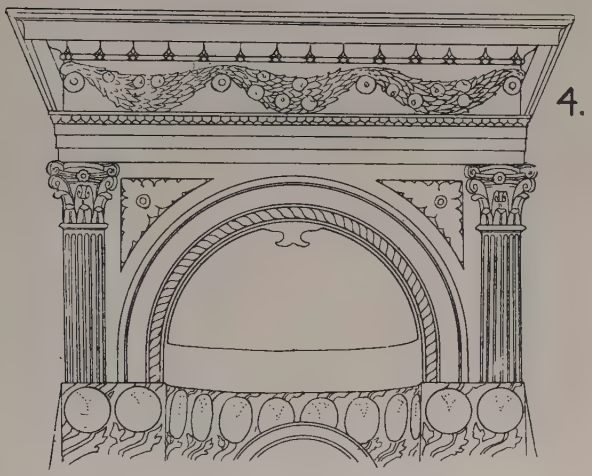
[1] The earliest example in painting of a frieze adorned with festoons, outside the works of Fra Angelico, is to be found in

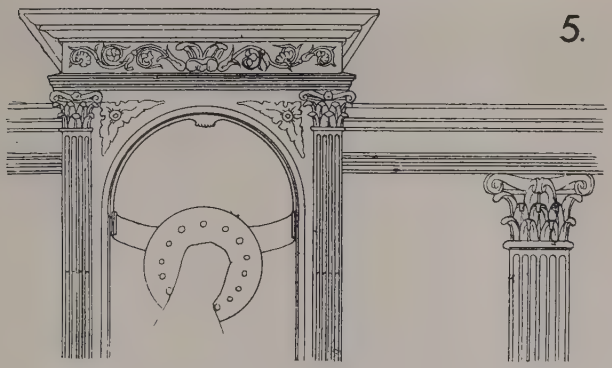




CANOPIES.

1. From "The Coronation of the Virgin" (*San Marco, Florence*).
2. From "The Madonna of Cortona."





CANOPIES.

3. From "The Madonna of Annalena."
4. From "The Madonna of San Marco."
5. From "The Madonna and Saints" (*San Marco, Florence*).

Novitiate of Santa Croce, which was erected by the same artist in 1434 and 1435, immediately after his return from Venice—whither he had gone, a voluntary exile, in company with his friend and patron, Cosimo *Pater Patriae*.

In the predelle of these altar-pieces we can trace the same kind of relationship, the same kind of gradual progress. I have already alluded to the classical details that are to be found in that of the Madonna dei Linajuoli. And in the predella of the Perugia Madonna we also see classical forms mingling with the Gothic. In one of the pictures that once formed a part of it—I mean that in which is represented both the Vision of St. Nicholas of Bari and his Preaching—there are friezes adorned with festoons and other classical details. But in the latter predella the architecture is drawn with more knowledge and is in better proportion in relation to the figures.

Regarding, then, only the architectural backgrounds of these altar-pieces and of their predella pictures, and leaving out altogether the weightier matters of *stilkritik*, it seems to me quite impossible that either the Madonna of Cortona or the Madonna of Perugia can have been painted during the period of the master's residence in the little Etruscan town, or in fact at any time before 1425.

But, it may be urged, if it were possible for Fra Angelico to have copied the Ionic capitals of

Masolino's fresco of "Salome dancing before Herod" in the Baptistery at Castiglione d'Olona, which was painted about the year 1436. In Domenico di Bartolo's design, to which I have alluded on page 77, there was a frieze with this kind of adornment.

the Florentine Baptistery—under the influence, it is is true, of the Renaissance architects, but before they had actually appeared in their works—why cannot the painter, under the same influence, have introduced a frieze adorned with festoons into his works even before such a feature makes its appearance in any work of the Renaissance sculptors and architects? To that I would reply that in Florence itself, in his own San Giovanni, the friar had Ionic capitals continually before his eyes. When, under the influence of Brunelleschi and Donatello, and especially of Michelozzo, he began to study classical forms, what would be more natural than that he should set to work to copy them? But with the Renaissance canopy the case is entirely different. Here he was altogether without a model. There were no early buildings in Florence or in any other of the places that he visited that had any forms at all resembling those which are to be found in the Renaissance canopies of Cortona, Annalena, and Perugia. These canopies bear the stamp of the influence of one man and of one man only—Michelozzo Michelozzi—an artist to whom, as we shall presently see, Fra Angelico continued to be greatly indebted, whose portrait he painted, whose patron he shared, with whom he was associated in a building wherein are to be found some of the most significant results of both his own and Michelozzo's artistic effort.

I have perhaps dwelt too long on the architecture in these four altar-pieces; but a careful study of it at least strengthens the conviction that no one of them could possibly have been painted before the friar's return to Florence in 1418, and assures us that they belong to a later period in his career. And thus it confirms the conclusions that we have arrived at by the ordinary methods of style-criticism. It also helps us

to measure the reliability of those critics who maintain that Fra Angelico rejected all study of the antique, and was not in sympathy with the great artistic movements of his time.

There is another Madonna by the friar which was painted, I believe, during this period of transition. I refer to the Madonna of San Domenico at Fiesole, the predella of which picture is in the National Gallery. It is very difficult to fix exactly the date of this altar-piece, as in the sixteenth century it underwent so drastic a restoration at the hands of Lorenzo di Credi. Not only did he repaint all the figures, but he provided it with an entirely new background. In fact, but little more than the outlines of the original work remains. The Virgin is represented enthroned. The Child, entirely naked, is half sitting on, half leaning against, her left arm. On either side of the throne are three angels, and two others, bearing vases full of roses, kneel in front. To the right of the Virgin stand St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Peter ; to the left, St. Dominic and St. Peter Martyr. It has obviously some points of resemblance with the Perugia altar-piece.

Strangely enough, the predella has suffered but little at the hands of the restorer. It is divided into three compartments. In the central one we see Christ in glory. His right hand is raised in benediction : in His left He bears a banner. Round Him is a crowd of angels, some of which, especially those playing on regals below the feet of the Saviour, recall the angels of the "Coronation" of the Uffizi. In the side-panels, patriarchs and prophets, saints and emperors are arranged in three tiers. Some of these figures again remind us of the Uffizi "Coronation."

Seeing, then, that this altar-piece and predella

have affinities on the one hand with the "Coronation of the Virgin," and with the Perugia altar-piece on the other, it is probable that it was painted between 1432 and 1437, towards the close of the friar's period of residence at Fiesole.

Three frescoes painted by Fra Angelico at San Domenico have come down to us. They are the "Madonna and Child" at St. Petersburg, the "Crucifixion" of the Louvre, and the "Crucifixion" still on the wall of the sacristy of the convent. None of the three are works of great importance, and all of them are in a most deplorable condition. The St. Petersburg picture is in such a state that it has but little artistic interest, and it is impossible, owing to the alterations that it has undergone in successive "restorations," to venture upon any criticism of its style. The Louvre "Crucifixion" is in a little better condition, and, from its affinities with the "Crucifixion" in the lower cloister at San Marco, it would seem to have been painted in this transition period, during the later years of Fra Angelico's residence at Fiesole.

The "Crucifixion" in the sacristy at Fiesole deserves a little fuller notice. In it the thorn-crowned head of Jesus leans neither to one side nor the other, but droops forward. It is much foreshortened, and the lower part of the face is seen in shadow. The eyes are closed. All joy and all hope have left the Christ. It is a representation of mental agony, silent, all-pervading, unutterable. The whole burden of the world's pain seems to be upon Him, and in the presence of it He appears as no triumphant God, but as the Son of Man crushed and helpless, full of a sense of its awful magnitude. "My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me!" —The cry has just left His lips.

Whilst less anatomically correct than the artist's later representations of the subject, this Fiesole "Crucifixion" is not a whit less impressive. One great idea runs through the whole composition. With simple means, yet with exquisite art, Fra Angelico succeeds in conveying to us the feeling with which the subject inspired him. He makes us realize his conception of the Man of Sorrows. And how much more deeply it affects us than the violent emotionalism of Bologna or of Germany!

Fra Angelico's second period was brief, but full of significance. In the course of it he finally shook off the cramping influence of the miniaturists, and acquired a bolder, freer style; he gained a fuller knowledge of nature, as well as of ancient forms of beauty; he also enlarged greatly his power of rendering. At the same time he lost none of those great artistic qualities that charm us in his earlier works. The change in his style is especially noticeable in his drawing and modelling of the human body, in his treatment of lineal perspective, and in the decorative use that he makes of architectural forms. At San Marco he was to have opportunity for making use of the new knowledge and power that he had gained.

CHAPTER IV

SAN MARCO

In the summer of 1435 the brothers of San Domenico quitted their convent at Fiesole to take up their abode nearer to Florence at San Giorgio Oltr' Arno. They did not remain long in this new resting-place. At the commencement of the following year, upon the intercession of Cosimo de' Medici, they were given the convent of San Marco; and, in spite of the fact that it was then in a ruinous condition, they decided at once to enter into residence there. Preceded by the mace-bearers of the Signory, and accompanied by three bishops, they came in solemn procession, with banner and chant, to San Marco.

For a time they were in great discomfort. The dilapidated convent was rendered yet more unfit for habitation by a fire which destroyed the dormitory. And although the brethren set to work to build for themselves wooden cabins, even thus they were not able to keep out the weather. As a consequence of their privations many of them fell sick, and some died. Their condition became more desperate day by day. At last their sufferings came to the ear of the Pope, who took compassion upon them, and, it is said, urged Cosimo, who was anxious to make some atonement for the sins into which his ambition had led him, to provide them with a new home. The Medici prince acted upon the counsel of the holy

Father, and, sending for his faithful Michelozzo, he commissioned him to erect a convent for the friars.

The architect set to work without delay. It was in 1437 that he commenced to build. Two years later the great chapel was finished, after that the beautiful Ionic cloister, then the library, and the whole edifice was completed in 1443.

As soon as the library was built Cosimo made another princely gift to the community. He placed in it Niccolò Niccoli's great collection of manuscripts; and to make a catalogue of them he engaged a certain eager little scholar, Tommaso Parentucelli, who was destined one day to find himself in the chair of St. Peter.[1]

Thus, in the early years of his residence at San Marco, Fra Giovanni was brought into frequent contact with two persons who in different ways powerfully influenced the course of his life—the great architect and the humanist Pope.

When Fra Angelico came to Florence the new movement in art was at its height. Brunelleschi's dome had just been consecrated by the Pope himself. Ghiberti was engaged upon his second great door. Donatello was at work in the sacristy of San Lorenzo. Luca della Robbia had nearly completed his *cantoria*. Filippo Lippi was painting his "Coronation of the Virgin." Paolo Uccello, Andrea del Castagno, and Domenico Veneziano were also at work in Florence, but no one of them had yet given to the world his most important paintings.

[1] For an account of Nicholas V., there is no book better to read than Vespasiano da Bisticci's "Vite." See Vespasiano da Bisticci, "Vite di Uomini Illustri, stampate la prima volta da Angiolo Mai e nuovamente da Adolfo Bartoli," 1859, pp. 20 to 48. For a life of Niccolò Niccoli, see pp. 473 to 482 of the same volume.

In this brotherhood of artists, Fra Giovanni was already recognized as a leader, as is shown by a letter[1] written by one of them, Domenico Veneziano. But whilst influencing his brother painters, we cannot see that he was at all influenced by any one of those then living in Florence. His great master in his own art, from whom he continued to learn more and more, had met his untimely death long before. It was to the Brancacci Chapel that Fra Angelico still went to school. Masaccio, and next to him Michelozzo, were the masters to whom he owed most.

Both these influences are plainly visible in one of the first works that the friar painted in Florence —the great Madonna of San Marco.[2] This, the most important of Fra Angelico's panel pictures, now hangs in a ruined state on the walls of the Florence Academy. The fragments of its predella are widely scattered. Three are at Munich, one is in Dublin, one in Paris, and two are in the same gallery as the altar-piece itself.

In this picture the Virgin is represented enthroned in front of a Renaissance canopy of most exquisite design. She is looking down at the child, who is seated on her knee. To the right of the Virgin, as well as on her left, stand four angels, the fairest Fra Angelico ever painted. A large eastern carpet is stretched before her throne, the lines of which are skilfully used to help the illusion of space. Upon it kneel the two patron saints of the Medici, St. Cosmo and St. Damian; whilst at either side are grouped

[1] See Doc. IV., p. 184.

[2] This picture cannot well have been commenced before the early spring of 1439, as it shows the influence upon Fra Angelico of the visit of the Orientals to Florence, and they did not arrive until the January and February of that year.

Alinari photo.] [*Academy, Florence.*

THE MADONNA OF SAN MARCO.

three other saints—St. Dominic, St. Francis, and St. Peter Martyr to the right; St. Lorenzo, St. John, and St. Mark to the left. Behind these figures is a low curtain, and beyond it rises a grove of pine and cypress and ilex. Between the stems of the trees we catch a glimpse of a lake surrounded by mountains.

In the predella is told the story of St. Cosmo and St. Damian. The pictures which form it are amongst the most remarkable panels the friar ever painted, and fully deserve the high praise that the Aretine biographer[1] bestowed upon them.

This "Madonna" of San Marco is, from whatever point of view we look at it, the greatest of Fra Angelico's altar-pieces. In the modelling of the figures and faces, in its lineal design, in the arrangement of the planes of the composition, in the blending and fusing of tones, in the painting of accessories, as well as in the unity of sentiment that runs through the whole picture, this work stands alone. Closely related to those great Madonnas described in the last chapter, and especially to the Madonna of Perugia, it is an anthology of the merits of them all. It is not too much to say that it is the typical altar-piece of the early Renaissance.

In it we see illustrated both the return to antiquity and the return to Nature—the return to antiquity in the exquisitely designed classical canopy above the Madonna, as well as in the architecture, sculpture, and armour in the predella pictures; the return to Nature in the naked child, in the finely-modelled figures of saints, in the beautiful landscape, a reminiscence of the lake of Trasimene with its girdle of low mountains.

[1] Vasari, Milanesi's edition, vol. ii., p. 508.

But the canopy merits a little further notice. It is the fourth of a series painted by Fra Angelico about this time, three of which I have already described, and it is the most important of them all. It is designed with more knowledge than any of the others. The entablature of it is more justly proportioned. It is, in fact, the best thing of its kind in the painting of the first half of the Quattrocento.

Upon the frieze are the festoons so dear to Michelozzo. The architrave resembles that which Brunelleschi imitated from the Florentine Baptistery, and which he made use of in the Pazzi chapel, in the sacristy of San Lorenzo, and on the façade of the Innocenti. The arch-moulding, which is one of a continuous impost, is also entirely characteristic of the school of Brunelleschi.

Both in the architecture of the picture, as well as in the increased knowledge of perspective shown in it, we find evidence of Fra Angelico's intimate contact with Michelozzo. Indeed, it is difficult not to believe that the architect himself had a hand in the designing of this canopy. For here we see none of that free pictorial treatment of classical forms which we meet with in some of the friar's other works. Here the drawing is almost painfully accurate. It has, in fact, a good deal of the character of an architect's sketch, and, in design, is very closely allied to the door of the Novitiate of Santa Croce, one of the most characteristic works of Michelozzo.

But in the predella pictures are to be found still more remarkable evidences of Fra Angelico's keen sympathy with the classical movement. Let us examine but one of them, that at Munich which represents the martyrs St. Cosmo and St. Damian before the judge Lysias. In this the judge is represented sitting on an antique throne. Standing

Hanfstängl photo.] [*Pinacothek, Munich*

before him on the one side are the two saints and their companions; on the other are their accusers with two soldiers. Behind the throne whereon the judge sits is a palace wall, divided by four fluted pillars. These are crowned by Ionic capitals copied directly from those in the convent cloister which was then a-building. Upon the capitals rests a suitable entablature, wherein we find a Brunelleschian architrave, composed of three bands, as in the canopy of the altar-piece. The frieze, too, decorated with pateræ, is quite in the Brunelleschian manner.

To the extreme left of the picture is a large niche, in front of which, upon an Ionic pedestal, stands a pagan god, copied from some antique statue. Here, again, in the spandrels of the arch are depicted the medallions[1] which Brunelleschi was but then introducing into the architecture of the Renaissance. The armour of the soldiers, and other accessories in the picture, also indicates that the artist has carefully studied antique forms. And all this is from the friar who, we are told, "bolted his monastery doors and sprinkled holy water in the face of the antique"!

But there is another feature in this predella which is deserving of attention. We see in it that Fra Angelico was anxious, and even too anxious, to get accurate local colour into his pictures. We see in it the influence of the Pageant.

On the Florentine painters of this age,[2] and notably

[1] Fra Angelico copied the medallions, no doubt, from the hospital of the Innocenti, which was then in construction, and which is within a stone's throw of S. Marco. At first these were quite plain medallions in the spandrels of the façade. Andrea della Robbia's beautiful *tondi* belong, of course, to a later date.

[2] Colvin, "A Florentine Picture-Chronicle," London, Quaritch, 1898, pp. 6, 13.

on Fra Angelico and Pesellino, the pageant, so characteristic a feature of Florentine life in the Quattrocento, exercised a most powerful influence. And at no time in her history did Florence see processions more frequent and more magnificent than those which passed through her streets in the year 1439. Early in that year the Council for the union of the Churches of the East and the West had removed its seat from Ferrara to the banks of the Arno. Pope and Patriarch and Emperor came to Florence with great pomp, with trains of prelates and princes, and for months afterwards there were frequent processions here and there in the old city, and imposing functions in the principal churches. Writers like Vespasiano da Bisticci[1] have discoursed upon the splendour of the costumes of the strangers from the gorgeous East. Their rich silken robes, heavy with gold, were admired by all. But their fantastic head-dresses, which the learned regarded with interest as being survivals of ancient forms of headgear, only excited the merriment of the populace.

By Fra Angelico the visitors were regarded with peculiar interest. For years afterwards, effects of their visit can be traced in his works. So eager a learner was he, so very much alive to what was going on in the world around him, that, for a time, under this influence he occasionally manifested a tendency to give too great prominence to local colour, to descend to mere illustration. It is so in the predella before us. Here he has produced an almost grotesque effect by giving us samples of all kinds of strange eastern head-dresses. Later on he recovered his artistic equilibrium and made a better use of the knowledge he had acquired. In

[1] Vespasiano da Bisticci, "Vite di Uomini Illustri," *ed. cit.*, pp. 12-15.

Alinari photo.] [*Academy, Florence.*

THE DEPOSITION.

the "Adoration of the Magi" at San Marco we find eastern costumes and oriental types of countenance introduced in such a way as to add to the decorative charm of the picture.

This altar-piece, which holds so important a place in the story of Fra Angelico's artistic development, is, alas, in a most deplorable condition; and, moreover, where it now hangs in the Florence Academy, it is in a very bad light. Its predella pictures are scattered all over Europe: they are to be found in France and Italy, in Germany, and in Ireland. Perhaps, then, it is scarcely to be wondered at that even serious students of Italian art have not done justice to this work, and that many of the significant features of it to which I have just alluded have remained unnoticed. Because of this neglect, I have had to treat of them at some length; for without knowing well this Madonna of San Marco it is impossible to understand rightly the relation in which Fra Angelico stood to the art of his age.

There is one other picture painted by the friar during the time of his residence at the convent, and that is the great "Deposition" of the Trinità, now in the Academy of Florence. It has suffered much at the hands of the restorers. It has been altered somewhat in shape, and three incongruous scenes, taken from some altar-piece by Lorenzo Monaco, have been added to it. But notwithstanding the ill-usage it has experienced, enough remains of the original work to justify Vasari's pronouncement that it ranks amongst the best of the friar's works. The nude figure is finely modelled, as are the forms of those who are engaged in taking down Christ's body from the cross. The picture contains many evidences of the effect of the artist's studies in the Brancacci Chapel. This is especially noticeable in

the modelling of the drapery of the figure on the extreme left of the picture, as well as in the head and head-dress of the figure on the extreme right.

It is in this picture, according to Vasari, that Fra Angelico introduced the portrait of his friend Michelozzo. In the "Lives of the Painters," at the close of the biography of the architect of San Marco, we are told that he is represented "in the figure of the old man with a capuchon on his head, representing Nicodemus, who is taking down the Saviour from the Cross." As has been frequently pointed out, Vasari has blundered here; for the figure wearing a capuchon is not Nicodemus. That saint is represented with his head bare and surrounded by an aureole. But Milanesi shows reason for believing that in the man with the black capuchon, who, with his right hand raised, addresses the apostle standing below, we have indeed a portrait of Michelozzo. And to me it seems that the great Sienese archivist and the many critics who think with him have given a reasonable explanation of the passage in the "Lives." I cannot agree with Dr. Wingenroth, who maintains, without offering any proof of his theory, that the whole story of Michelozzo's portrait is an invention of the Aretine biographer. In regard both to Michelozzo and Fra Angelico, Vasari shows himself to be singularly well informed, as he was indeed likely to be, and there are several circumstances that lend probability to the assertion that the friar painted his friend's portrait. They were closely associated at San Marco. The painter was, as I have shown, much under the influence of the architect. Moreover, in other pictures painted by Fra Angelico about this time we find portraits of living personages, friends, and associates of his own. What is more likely than that

he should have painted the portrait of an artistic colleague for whom he evidently had a very great admiration ?

If, then, this figure with a black capuchon be a portrait of Michelozzo, as I hold it is, we have here another clue to the date of the picture. According to this representation, he would appear to have been about forty-five to fifty years old when the "Deposition" was painted. As Michelozzo is believed to have been born in 1396, this would place the execution of the picture between the years 1441 and 1446 ; and that is just the period to which considerations of style would lead us to assign it.

There is another picture [1] closely allied to this in which the portrait of Michelozzo occurs, and that is the dead Christ which the artist painted for the Confraternity of the Temple,[2] and which is now in the Florentine Academy. It is in every way a much inferior work to the "Deposition," and the only really charming passage in it is the landscape with its distant hills and tranquil evening sky.

These three pictures, then—that is, the San Marco altar-piece and the two "Depositions" of Sta. Trinità and the Confraternity of the Temple—are the principal works in tempera of Fra Angelico's third period. We now come to the consideration of the monumental task which occupied the friar for the greater part of the time of his residence at S. Marco.

Fra Angelico, we are told, began to decorate the walls of the new convent before the building was

[1] Michelozzo's features also appear in the representations of St. Joseph in the series of little panel pictures, now in the Academy at Florence, which formerly adorned the silver-press of the Annunziata.

[2] At Sta. Appollonia, in Florence, there is, in the outer room, a curious copy of this picture with a different landscape, evidently by some early asssociate of Verrocchio.

quite finished; but he cannot very well have set to work there until the structural part of the first cloister was completed. It is, therefore, improbable that he commenced to paint in fresco at San Marco before 1439 or 1440. The *milieu* in which he then found himself was in the highest degree stimulating to a painter contemplating such a task as his. It was helpful alike to the artist and the saint. His sense of the reality, beauty, and importance of the events he was called upon to present, was heightened by constant contact with S. Antonino and the band of earnest religious who gathered round him. His artistic instinct was stimulated by his association with Michelozzo and other artists, but above all by the general conditions that obtained in Florence at that time. It was an age of artistic progress, an age of creation, when manifestations of new life were showing themselves on all sides, and Florence was the centre of that life. And Fra Angelico, having been powerfully affected by whatever was really vital in the new movement, having himself shared in it, teaching others and allowing himself to be taught by them, came to his task fully equipped and prepared in every way for achieving a monumental work. The six years that had intervened between the commencement of the Madonna and the commencement of the altar-piece at San Marco had been, as we have seen, years of extraordinary progress. Not in vain had the friar worked in the Brancacci Chapel. Not in vain had he gained practice in fresco painting in his convent of San Domenico.

One of the earliest, as well as one of the most consummate, of his works at San Marco is the "Crucifixion,"[1] which faces the entrance to the con-

[1] Known also as "St. Dominic at the Foot of the Cross."

Alinari photo.] [*San Marco, Florence.*

THE CRUCIFIXION.

vent. Christ, with His head inclined to the right, is looking down at St. Dominic, who kneels below, clasping the cross, and gazing up in awe and adoration at his suffering Master. Beautiful in sentiment, admirable in design, it is yet more admirable in execution. The painter shows here a power of rendering the nude that has won for his work the ungrudging praise of some of the most modern of modern masters of his own craft, men who in their convictions and habits of thought are removed as far as possible from the friar of San Marco, and who, moreover, in their estimate of a work of art, do not regard its theological or historical significance. It has suited some persons of extreme theological or anti-theological prejudices, who have little real love of art and little power of observation, to repeat in a parrot-like way the assertion that Fra Angelico was weak in his rendering of the nude. In mere power, Fra Angelico's presentations of the human figure are certainly inferior to Masaccio and to Andrea del Castagno. But, nevertheless, few Florentines of the Quattrocento had a more accurate knowledge of the nude, or could render it with more truth and feeling. He chose, it is true, not bulky, bossy types; but, as a rule, forms that were somewhat attenuated, somewhat ascetic, taking for models, perhaps, some of his brethren at the convent. But his modelling of such types is admirable. Let him who doubts it look at the arms of the Christ in the "Crucifixion" before us. Nay! in the whole picture does not the artist adequately and artistically render the material as well as the spiritual significance of the scene?

Fra Angelico's whole treatment of form, in fact, is entirely artistic. He realized to the full that in painting a figure it is essential for the artist to give apparent vitality to his subject, to delude our

senses into admitting the reality of the person represented. But at the same time, in his enthusiasm for form, he never allowed himself to lose sight of other great correlative truths of art.

And in this he showed himself to be a true artist. For the painter who is indeed an artist never forgets that figure painting is, after all, if it be anything more than mere historical or anatomical illustration, a branch of decoration ; and he never allows his enthusiasm for form to lead him into artistic sectarianism, he never exalts one essential truth out of the decorator's whole *corpus* of fundamental dogma at the expense of all the rest. He realizes, for instance, that it is of the nature of heresy to hold without qualifications that "*the* essential in the art of painting is to stimulate our consciousness of tactile values."

And that, in fact, was just the sectarian error that one of Fra Angelico's own contemporaries, Andrea del Castagno, fell into. "To render form, to give roundness and solidity to the figures I paint, to make them stand out well from their surroundings, to enable people to feel that they can walk round them, that they will yield resistance to pressure, to stimulate, in short, their sense of touch—that," said Andrea, "is the one thing needful in painting, that shall be my one great aim as an artist!" And in that aim he succeeded. As we look at those massy, bulky personages in the Sta. Apollonia frescoes—Niccolo Acciajuoli, Pippo Spano, and Farinata degli Uberti—they seem to be stepping down out of the painted framework and making straight for us!

But is such an exhibition of modelling gratifying to us? Does it add much to our æsthetic pleasure? In spite of the appeal to our tactile sense, do we feel comfortable in the presence of these obtrusive

personages? I think not. And the reason is that the artist, in his loyalty to one great truth, namely, that to stimulate the tactile consciousness is *an* essential[1] in the art of painting, has forgotten the correlative truth that limits and qualifies it, that in a picture the figures should *always live inside their framework*. The one truth, like the other, is fundamental. For the repulsion that we feel when the figures painted are so modelled that they seem to be coming out on this side of the frame, no less than the pleasure that we feel in contemplating beautiful renderings of the human form, is innate, and is due to certain psychical processes. And it is essential for our pleasure that a decoration, when it is not merely flat, should give us a sense of greater freedom, of greater roominess, that any figures which form a part of it should not threaten to close us in whether we like it or not, and so to interfere with and narrow our liberty of movement. We had rather that it seemed as though any scene painted on the wall were taking place in some adjoining apartment or in the free air outside.

Of course there are persons of blunted sensibilities who do not resent this constant obtrusiveness, this want of reticence, in a painted figure. There are also others of an opposite class, persons not lacking, indeed, in sensitiveness or refinement, but physically weak, anæmic, exhausted, whose very weakness leads them to over-value mere strength in a painter, and to seek for the stimulus which the contemplation of form well rendered gives them, at all costs. And there are, and have ever been, quite third-rate painters who have triumphantly pandered to both these classes of people. But a

[1] Not "*the* essential," mark!

really great artist is conscious that it is not enough for him to have much skill in the rendering of form; that to be really effective that power must be qualified by, and held in check by, other great artistic qualities. Fra Angelico felt this intuitively: and the consequence was that he always made an entirely artistic use of such knowledge of form as he had.

We find abundant proof of this here at San Marco. In the "Transfiguration," in the "Madonna of the Corridor," in the "Nailing to the Cross," in the "Adoration of the Magi," we see figures beautifully modelled, and with all the appearance of vitality, of capacity for movement, but which never seek to obtrude themselves, and in the conception and rendering of which the artist always had in mind his whole pictorial scheme.

We will now proceed to consider in turn the rest of the more important of the San Marco frescoes, beginning with the lunettes which are above the five doorways of the cloister. Here we find represented St. Peter Martyr, St. Dominic, a Pietà, St. Thomas Aquinas, and "Christ as a Pilgrim." And these signify spiritually certain great monastic virtues: silence, obedience, self-sacrifice, enthusiasm for divine learning, and brotherly love, the bond and crown of all the rest. The fresco of "Christ as a Pilgrim," the most beautiful of all the series, is placed over the entrance to the hospitium of the convent. In it Fra Angelico reminded his brethren not only of the obligation of entertaining strangers, but of the duty of practising continually all the other corporal works of mercy, this one being taken as a representation of the others.[1] Christ is repre-

[1] Just as St. James, in his definition of "true religion," evidently

Alinari photo.] [*San Marco, Florence.*

CHRIST AS A PILGRIM, MET BY TWO DOMINICANS.

sented with a fair beard and beautiful wavy hair falling down to His shoulder. With His right hand He grasps His pilgrim's staff: His left is held by one of the monks, who looks into His eyes with loving anxiety. The tall staff divides the lunette into two halves, right and left. The left arm of Christ and the right arm of the Dominican are both extended horizontally, and, the hands joining in front of the upright staff in the centre of the picture, a cross is thus formed. It cannot but be that the artist intended here to signify that the cross is the symbol of love, and that self-giving is the first effect and proof of love. And how full of self-forgetful sympathy, of tender solicitude, are these two monks who greet this pilgrim, not knowing that He is divine, but regarding Him, merely because he is a man, a brother in need of succour, as a lieutenant of Christ.

In the chapter-house of the convent, entirely covering its eastern wall, is the great "Crucifixion" of Fra Angelico. Vasari tells us that, as soon as the church and convent were completed, Cosimo himself charged the artist to paint here the passion of Christ; and the presence in the picture of the Medici saints of St. Cosmo and St. Damian gives some colour to this tradition. It was probably painted in the years 1442-3, and at about the same time that the friar was engaged upon the great "Deposition" of the Trinità. This, his largest work, was never finished,[1] and it has suffered considerably at the hands

speaks of the one charitable act of "visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction" as representative of all other works of love and mercy.

[1] Almost all the friar's biographers have fallen into error in regard to the background of this picture. One of the most recent of them regards its present red colour as the addition of some

of restorers. The central figure, and the group of women at the foot of the cross, have met with the worst treatment, and all the figures to the right of the Christ have been more or less injured. The great fathers and founders of orders in the other half of the picture have experienced less severe usage. But the face of St. Ambrose, and even St. Dominic's beautiful head, have not entirely escaped profanation. And some hardy barbarian has vigorously retouched most of the high lights with *biacca*. Nevertheless, in spite of the atrocities of restorers and notwithstanding the incongruous effect of its background, it remains one of the most beautiful and most impressive works in the whole range of Italian painting.

Christ is represented hanging between the two thieves. The one gazes enraptured at the Saviour; the other, uttering blasphemies in his agony of body and despair of soul, turns his head away from Him. Below, at the foot of the cross, a little to the right of it, are the three Maries. The Virgin, half-swooning with grief and horror, is being supported by St. John and St. Mary Magdalene before her. Further away to the right is St. John the Baptist. The face and figure recall the St. John the Baptist of Perugia, but here the artist has been by no means so successful as in that wonderful creation. St. Mark, kneeling, points at the book of the Gospel. Next to him is St. Laurence, vested in a long dalmatic, with the instrument of his martyrdom by his side. Behind

restorer! As a matter of fact Fra Angelico, like all other Italian fresco painters before Raphael, was accustomed to lay, in *buon fresco*, a ground of sinopia before applying a blue pigment. Ultramarine and *azzuro della magna* were only used in *secco*. In the case of the great Crucifixion, the red ground was prepared in fresco, but the blue was never added in *secco;* or, if it was added, it has entirely disappeared.

Alinari photo.] [*San Marco, Florence.*

"THE GREAT CRUCIFIXION."

him St. Cosmo,[1] with his hands tightly clasped together, gazes in mute agony at his dying Lord. St. Damian, unable to endure the sight, turns away to weep. Near the foot of the cross, to the left of Christ, at the head of the founders of orders and the fathers of the Church, kneels St. Dominic, gazing upward with arms outstretched—a very beautiful figure. Next to him is St. Ambrose, by whom stands St. Augustine, and in front of them kneels St. Jerome, whose noble head is finely conceived and exquisitely rendered. Next to this group is St. Francis, also kneeling, weighed down with pain of sympathy. Behind the great prior of La Verna is St. Romualdo, clasping a book with both hands. St. Benedict, a grave, patriarchal figure, leans upon his staff; whilst before him is St. John Gualberto, weeping. St. Peter Martyr is the last kneeling figure to the right, and behind him stands St. Thomas Aquinas, with a strong, ugly face, very different from the traditional representation of him.[2] In the decorative semicircular framework of the picture are placed at equal intervals the half figures of prophets bearing scrolls, and below is a frieze adorned with medallions, in which are placed the heads of seventeen of the most illustrious members of the Dominican order. Amongst these are portraits of two of Fra Angelico's contemporaries: Giovanni Dominici and S. Antonino.[3] The nimbus round the head of the latter is, of course, a later addition.

[1] Vasari says that this is a portrait of Nanni di Banco, who was, he adds, a friend of the friar.

[2] Signor Supino is, no doubt, right in supposing this to be a contemporary portrait. I have heard one of the most brilliant portrait painters of this generation express the same opinion whilst in the presence of the picture itself.

[3] Neither Baldinucci nor Milanesi have shown sufficient grounds for their denial of Vasari's assertion that Fra Angelico painted on

Coming into this cool, vaulted room, one day, out of the blinding sunlight of an Italian July, there rose before me, with extraordinary clearness, Dorchester Abbey, cold and gray, with the river flowing by it under the green willows. What was the cause of this apparition? Was it merely physical association? Had the great church proved just such a cool reposeful shelter on some sultry summer day? I raised my eyes, and I realized at a glance that there was another link of association, not physical, but mental. The painted tree growing out of St. Dominic, and inclosing in its encircling branches representations of his spiritual offspring, recalled to me a similar conceit in stone—the Jesse window of Dorchester. Immediately below it is sculptured the recumbent figure of Jesse. From out of his loins grows a tree, of which the central mullion forms the trunk, on whose branches are seen his greatest descendants, amongst which is the Son of Man Himself. In Oxfordshire abbey and in Florentine convent alike we are reminded of our dependence on the past, of the solidarity of the race.

In the refectory Fra Angelico painted another "Crucifixion." This has been destroyed, and frescoes by Fra Bartolommeo and Sogliani now cover the wall whereon it was. But upstairs, in the cells, there remain no less than eighteen "Crucifixions" by Fra

one of these medallions the head of S. Antonino. A nimbus has been placed around the head: the face itself, like others of the series, has been freely restored; and the inscription has been altered. But even if it could be shown (which it cannot) that another name than that of Antonino was originally attached to this head, it might still be that the friar painted here the features of the prior he loved and revered, and that the name of Antonino was painted over the other, after the death of the good archbishop, by the order of the brothers. Critics and commentators are too ready to conclude that they have convicted Vasari of inaccuracy.

[*Albertina Collection, Vienna.*

THE CRUCIFIXION.

From a drawing.

Giovanni or of his school. For the most part, however, they are of little artistic significance. The greater part of them are more or less tolerable reproductions of the master's motives by pupils working under his direction. All of them have suffered at the hands of restorers. And some, indeed, are in such a state that they are quite valueless for the purposes of scientific criticism. There are, in fact, only three of them of which it can be said with any certainty that they are by Fra Angelico's hand, and the study of which will help us in any way to accomplish the end we have in view.

The first of these is that on the wall to the left of the door of entrance. In this fresco the master has closely followed the "Crucifixion" downstairs, but it is in every way inferior to the earlier work.[1]

The second is the "Crucifixion" in the fourth cell. This has been very much injured by restorers, but enough of it is left to show that it is by the master himself. His handiwork is clearly traceable in the head of the Virgin, as well as in that of St. Jerome, which recalls somewhat the representation of the saint in the Perugia altar-piece.

The third is in cell No. 37,[2] which is at the end of the east corridor, opposite to the cell used by Cosimo. It is the only one at San Marco, excepting the great "Crucifixion" of the chapter-house, in which the two thieves are introduced. The most striking figure of the composition is that of St. Dominic, who stands below the cross of Jesus, with arms wide outstretched, gazing upward in rapt adoration—a noble figure, finely conceived and

[1] There is a design for this fresco in the Albertina collection at Vienna.

[2] It was this cell, so tradition says, that was afterwards occupied by Fra Bartolommeo.

beautifully painted. Behind him kneels St. Thomas Aquinas, who has taken his eyes off the book he has been reading to gaze at the crucified. At the other side of the cross stands the divine Mother, also looking upward. Beyond her is St. John, who covers his face with his hands in an agony of grief.

Altogether there are no less than forty cells in the upper story of the convent of San Marco in which are works by Fra Angelico or of his school. These frescoes may be classified as follows: In cells 1 to 10 (inclusive), which are in the north corridor, are works by the master himself. The Madonna in cell No. 11, the last in this corridor, is from the hand of a pupil. The "Crucifixions" in cells 15 to 22 (inclusive) were painted by assistants of Fra Angelico. The frescoes in cells 23 to 30 are also the work of pupils, but those in cells 24 (the Baptism), 26 (a Pietà), and 28 (the Way to Calvary) were probably designed by the master. In cells 31 to 39 are frescoes which are entirely, or mainly, from the hand of Fra Angelico. The "Crucifixions" in cells 40 to 44 are almost wholly the work of assistants; only one—that in cell No. 42—showing any traces of the master's direct intervention. The three frescoes on the walls of the corridor, to one of which we have already alluded, are entirely by Fra Giovanni.

It has been urged against the frescoes in the cells that, with the exception of the "Adoration of the Magi," they are not decorations in the sense that the great "Crucifixion" of the chapter-house is; nor have they the same relation to the architectural form of the building in which they are placed as have Fra Angelico's frescoes in the Vatican. They are, it is urged, merely pictures on the wall. And so, in a sense, they are; but in planning the dimensions and form of the fresco, its position, its colour

Alinari photo.] [*San Marco, Florence.*

THE ANNUNCIATION.

scheme, and the size of the figures represented, the artist always kept in mind the dimensions and lighting of the cell wherein it was placed. And each fresco is, after all, satisfactory as a decoration in the narrowest sense of the term.

But it seems to me that Fra Angelico had a symbolical reason for painting frescoes of this form. In each cell that had a window in the outer wall of the convent he placed by the side of that window another frame, larger indeed, but of the same shape. By the side, that is, of the window that looked out upon things terrestrial, there was placed another window, through which the occupant might look upon heavenly things.

Facing the door of entrance to the upper corridor of the cloisters is the fresco of the "Annunciation." And in the third cell is another representation of the same subject. Both in form and face the announcing angel in the one picture nearly resembles the announcing angel in the other. The two representations of the Virgin are also very similar; but whilst there are these points of resemblance between the two pictures, in other respects—in the posture of the two figures, in the colour of their garments and in the *ambiente* in which they are placed—there is the greatest variation. In the "Annunciation" of the corridor the Virgin is represented seated, and the angel greets her with bended knee. In the "Annunciation" of the cell the Virgin kneels on a low stool and the angel stands erect. In the one picture the arcading of the *loggia* under which the Virgin sits and the inclosed garden with the grove beyond are—as in the "Annunciation" of Cortona and Madrid—important elements in the composition. In the other the garden is scarcely visible, and of the arcading there can only be seen a corner of a Corinthian capital and a portion of two

of the pillars. It is true that in the background of the fresco in the cell an additional figure is introduced in the person of St. Dominic, but on the whole the last of the friar's great "Annunciations" is marked by extreme simplicity. And as it is simpler in its composition, so also, notwithstanding this addition, it is simpler in its symbolism, and simpler, too, in its colour scheme.

It is simpler, I say, in its symbolism. In it we have no representation of the Fall such as occurs in the pictures of Cortona and Madrid, no holy dove descending on the Virgin from the Father, no *hortus inclusus*, no profusion of flowers testifying to Nature's joy at the removal of the curse, at the coming of her Lord. But never was the spiritual significance of the scene more forcibly expressed. It has all the dramatic intensity, all the simplicity, all the directness, of a fresco of Giotto, with much more grace of line and charm of colour.

And the beauty of its colour scheme, too, does not consist in its variety. Here there is neither ultramarine nor gold, nor abundance of green leafage, only a simple harmony in rose and white—the rose telling of the rose of Sharon, the white of Mary's virgin purity—"Tu es pulchra, Maria, et macula non est in te!"

In the "Annunciation" of the corridor the influence of the architects is clearly traceable. Two of the capitals and pillars supporting the *loggia* are of the Ionic order, and are careful copies of those which Michelozzo had just completed in the cloister below: whilst in one of the spandrels of the arcade we again find the Brunelleschian medallion.

In the "Noli me Tangere" our Lord, clad in a white robe, with a mattock over His shoulder, is walking away from the rock-hewn sepulchre. And

Alinari photo.] [*San Marco, Florence.*

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

here the friar's love of nature and the symbolism of nature has again asserted itself. Wild flowers in abundance spring up around the feet of the Christ. Behind him is a luxuriant grove of olive and cypress and palm. To look upon it has much the same effect upon us as the sound of pleasant music on an April morning. We feel for the moment that it is springtide and Eastertide. Full of the joy of the Resurrection, all nature seems to be singing a Benedicite. St. Mary Magdalene, a beautiful figure, more flower-like than the flowers, with her face aglow with love and new-found joy, falls on her knee as she exclaims "Master!"

Of equal strength and beauty with the presentation of Christ in this fresco is the principal figure in the fresco of the "Transfiguration," which is in a cell in the same corridor. Vested again in a long white robe, He stands on the holy mount with arms fully extended, His attitude telling "of the decease that He should accomplish at Jerusalem." On either side of Him, to the right and left, the heads of Moses and Elias appear through the clouds. Below them are the Blessed Virgin and St. Dominic. Whilst at the foot of the rocky platform whereon the Saviour stands, St. Peter, St. James and St. John kneel in wonder and astonishment. The attitudes of St. Peter and St. John are somewhat unnatural; though in the painting of the heads of the apostles, as well as of those of the other spectators, the artist has shown all his wonted power of rendering expression. But minor defects are forgotten in looking at the central figure, radiant, majestic, with that beautiful head so full of strength and sweetness. As we look at it, St. Peter's exclamation rises to our lips: "Lord, it is beautiful for us to be here!"[1]

[1] Κύριε, καλόν ἐστιν ἡμᾶς ὧδε εἶναι.

In the next cell, No. 8, is the fresco of "Jesus at the Prætorium." The figure of a young man reading, representing St. Dominic, has all the appearance of being a transcript from life. In the fresco, too, of the "Maries at the Sepulchre" the group of women to the right is a beautiful presentation of womanhood.

It is in a cell in this same south corridor that we find one of the friar's greatest works—the fresco of the "Coronation of the Virgin." The Christ, seated on a white cloud, clothed in white, with fair hair falling over His shoulders, is placing the crown on the head of the white-robed Virgin, who bends forward towards her Son with her hands crossed on her breast. The clouds which half encircle the two principal figures are bordered by a rainbow, and, below this, six saints form another semicircle. The design of the whole composition is that of the crown itself. It is a glorious tiara, and the saints are the jewels in its outer rim.

And as in the composition, so in the colour scheme of the fresco the painter employed the simplest means with the most consummate art. According to his design, the drapery of the two principal figures which form the upper portion of the composition was to be white, and the clouds which half surround them were also to be white. He reversed, therefore, his usual method; and instead of putting in the high lights last by means of fine hatchings in *secco* of pure *biacca*, he gave a white ground to the fresco, laying in the shadows in *secco* with a light gray tone, and allowing the white surface of *buon fresco* to do all the rest. In this way his work has a lustre which it otherwise could not have had. Every artist knows that the more he "teases" colour, the duller and muddier it gets, and that he attains the

Alinari photo.] [*San Marco, Florence.*

THE MARIES AT THE SEPULCHRE.

Alinari photo.] [*San Marco, Florence.*

THE CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN.

Alinari photo.] [*San Marco, Florence.*

MARY AND MARTHA.

best results by the greatest economy of means, by permitting the prepared surface to come forward as much as possible. And this is especially true in the case of mural decoration. Here, more than anywhere else, the artist should strive for quality of surface. A wall painting, wherein the original ground plays a great part, is stronger, brighter, more reposeful, holds the wall better, and is in every way more satisfying than a work wherein the background has been much painted over.

Although the picture is not all *buon fresco*, the artist so thoroughly understands what his medium can be made to do, and has such a perfect command of it, that we never can bring ourselves to regret his departure from the more orthodox methods of fresco painting. In the hands of other artists, such as Pinturrichio, the lavish use of painting in *secco*, it is true, seems to tend to greater flatness in the figures, to greater opacity of colour. But Fra Angelico makes us realize what can be done by a moderate use of this method at the hands of a painter who is not content with a popular success, but who sets before himself continually some high standard of artistic attainment.

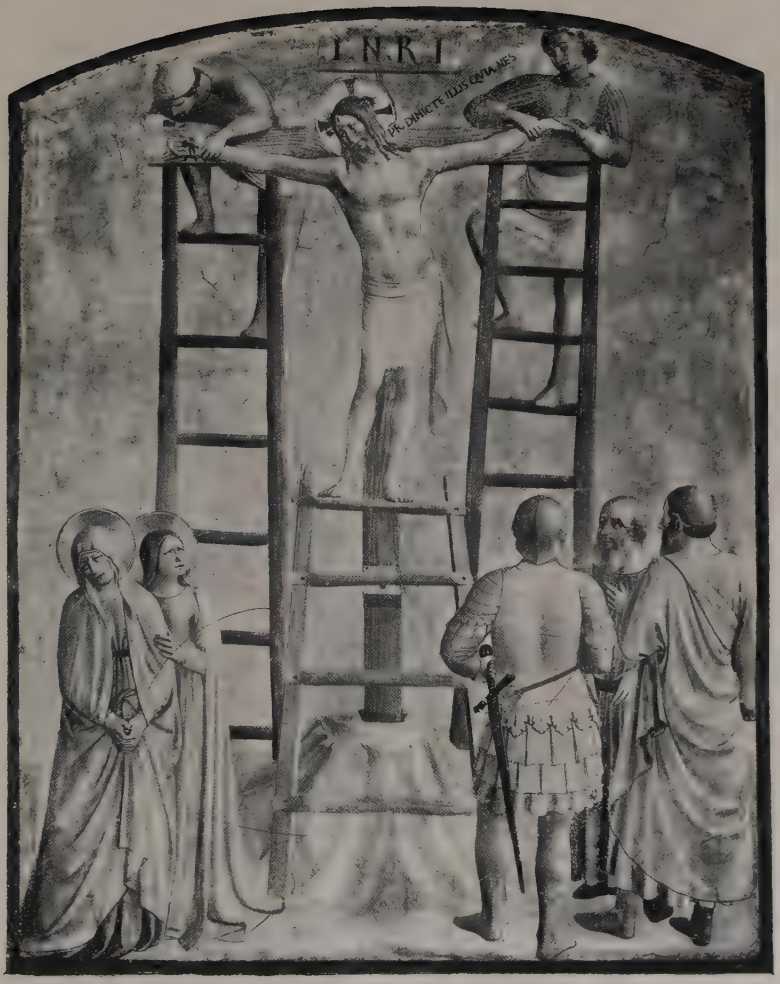
Not less remarkable than its beauty of colour and line, than its triumphs of modelling, is the exquisite sentiment of this picture. Never has the scene received more sympathetic treatment.

In the "Nailing to the Cross" Christ is represented as yielding Himself a willing victim to His executioners. Below, on the one side, stands the centurion, marvelling at His resignation. On the other, the Virgin, half swooning, is supported by St. Mary Magdalene. In the composition of this fresco Fra Angelico shows the greatest originality. It was a very unusual theme, and in choosing it as

a subject for a picture he followed no known precedent. He was led to do so, it is believed, by reading a legendary life of St. Mary Magdalene, written in the preceding century. "When these holy women turned themselves," says the hagiologist, "they saw Messer Jesus mounting the ladder with His feet and hands. And when they beheld Him thus with their eyes, they made such great and piteous wail that heaven and earth seemed to weep with them. And all the rest of the people wept for pity of Him, and of His mother, and of Magdalene. . . . But Messer Jesus, I trow, went up the ladder of the Cross with a right good will. Indeed the Centurion, who afterwards was saved, wotted it well; and, said he to himself, wise man that he was: 'How great a marvel is this, that this Prophet should seem to go up so willingly to be nailed to the Cross, and that He should resist not at all, nor let any plaint escape His lips.' And whilst he thus stood and marvelled in himself, Messer Jesus had mounted as high as was required of Him; and turning Himself on the ladder, and opening His royal arms, with right good grace He yielded His hands to those who were charged to pierce them."

The legend belongs to the Middle Age, but the master's treatment of it is entirely modern. Nowhere else in the whole series at San Marco does he show himself to be so much under the influence of Masaccio as he is here. With what a fine sense of form has the artist drawn and modelled the two muscular executioners and the body of Christ! Here he reveals most convincingly a knowledge of the nude, and a consummate power of giving artistic expression to that knowledge.

And yet, notwithstanding the pronounced origin-



Alinari photo.] [*San Marco, Florence.*

THE NAILING TO THE CROSS.

ality of the subject and its treatment, notwithstanding its fine artistic qualities, this picture is but little noticed by visitors to the convent, and has, for the most part, received but casual mention from Fra Angelico's critics and biographers. Of course the reason of it is that it cannot by any stretch of imagination be made to confirm the popular view of him.

In the fresco of the "Last Supper" we see eight of the apostles seated at the table, one of them being in the act of receiving the wafer from his Master, who carries the chalice in His left hand. On the extreme right kneel four other disciples; whilst at the other side is the blessed Virgin, also kneeling. For a background the friar has painted a white interior wall of the convent, pierced by two windows, an exact copy of those of the cells. Through these painted windows can be seen the red roof of the opposite side of the cloister, and its white wall, in which are the windows of the same form. In fact, through these windows in the picture can be seen just the same kind of view as is visible from the window of the cell in which the fresco is. Here we have another instance of the friar's readiness to observe and to use the pictorial elements that presented themselves to him in the little world in which he moved.

This painting is not without its defects. In the faces of some of the apostles, as well as in the robes of the clothing, Fra Angelico's hand is distinctly traceable. But here and there it betrays the fact that it was designed somewhat hurriedly. It would be impossible, for instance, for Jesus to communicate St. John in the position in which He is represented as doing so. Even were the table narrower than it actually is, He could not, standing as He is, place

the wafer in the disciple's mouth from the other side of it. Again, the well that is seen through the arch to the right, while by itself well enough designed, and being also, it must be allowed, a beautiful symbolical allusion to one of the most striking passages in the Hebrew prophets, is, nevertheless, introduced very awkwardly and irrelevantly in relation to the rest of the background. In other respects, too, this work is singularly uneven. But in spite of its shortcomings it is undoubtedly by the master himself.

Of all the series of frescoes at San Marco none is more important than that of the "Adoration of the Magi." It is in the cell which Cosimo was accustomed to occupy when he came to the convent to see his friend S. Antonino, the prior. In this same chamber Eugenius IV. passed the night of the Eve of the Epiphany in 1442, when he came to consecrate the church. And it was no doubt in allusion to these two facts that the subject of the "Adoration of the Kings" was chosen by Fra Angelico. The fresco was probably commenced immediately after Eugenius' visit.

As in other representations of the same subject by the master, St. Joseph stands by the Virgin's side, and the oldest of the kings kneels to kiss the infant's foot. But in the general idea of the composition, this fresco differs widely from the artist's usual treatment of the theme. Here we have a procession, a pageant. The three kings are followed by a suite of nearly a score of persons of different ranks. The greater part of them are wearing eastern head-dresses, and to some of the company he has succeeded in giving countenances of a markedly oriental type. All the heads are full of character and finely individualized, and some of them—such

Alinari photo.] [*San Marco, Florence.*

THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI.

Alinari photo.]

[*San Marco, Florence.*

MADONNA AND SAINTS.

as, for instance, that of the man with his hand on his sword-hilt who is in the middle of the throng—have all the character of portraits. The whole picture is full of reminiscences of the sojourn in Florence of the eastern Emperor and Patriarch. The splendour of the Orientals had impressed the artist as powerfully as it did another spectator, Vespasiano da Bisticci. The mountain background of the picture, cold and severe as it is, helps to throw into prominence, by contrast, the magnificence of these pilgrims from the gorgeous East.

But it is not because of its records of fact, but because of the painter's pictorial use of them that this picture has so enduring a charm. It is rich in all the qualities of great decoration. The composition is beautifully spaced, and it well fills the wall upon which it is placed. The fresco is full of harmonies of line, of delicate passages of colour; and the figures are modelled in such a way as to make us feel their vitality. There are other works in the convent that are more immediately impressive, but whose sweetness cloys a little if seen too frequently. This, however, is an almost inexhaustible well of æsthetic delight. I never revisit it without experiencing some new sensation of pleasure.

The "Madonna and Saints" on the wall in the south corridor is equally important in the history of the development of Fra Angelico. It forms another link between the San Marco altar-piece and the frescoes in the Studio of Pope Nicholas.

The Virgin is represented enthroned on a daïs in front of an apsidal recess. The canopy is surmounted by an attic, which is supported by fluted Corinthian pilasters with carefully designed capitals of the same order. There is, on either side of this

erection, a wall divided by Corinthian pilasters, above which is an entablature with cornice, frieze, and architrave. The Madonna, as in another of Fra Angelico's later representations of her—the Madonna del Bosco—is clad in a blue cloak with a tunic of the same colour. The Child, seated on her lap, is not entirely nude, as is the case in the artist's other later Madonnas. In other respects He closely resembles the infant in the San Marco altar-piece. On either side of the Virgin are four saints. To her right, stand St. Mark, St. Cosmo, St. Damian, and St. Dominic; to her left, are St. John, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Lorenzo, and St. Peter Martyr.

Remarkable for the simplicity and beauty of its design, for the *naïve* charm of its colour, for its fine pictorial treatment of architecture, it is yet more remarkable because of its harmony of sentiment. The faces are no mere types; each is full of individual character, and yet, though diverse, the result is a wonderful unity. And how beautiful is each separate note in this ten-toned chord! Beautiful as are the faces of the saints, the beauty of the Madonna, and yet more the beauty of the infant, transcends them all. Never has Fra Angelico given more complete expression to the maternal feelings of the Mother, to the childlike qualities of the Child.

These two last frescoes—the "Adoration of the Magi" and the "Madonna of the Corridor"—are important links in the chain which connects the artist's works at San Marco with those in the Studio of Pope Nicholas. It is by studying them in connection with such earlier pictures as the San Marco altar-piece that students will avoid being led astray by those who, professing to be emancipated from the old traditional conception of the artist, are, nevertheless, still very much enthralled by it. Knowing

these works well, they will no longer be able to accept the view that Fra Angelico was the last of the Giottesques. They will realize that he was, in truth, a pioneer of the new movement, the first of the painters to study seriously antique forms, and one of the first to endeavour to arrive at a truer rendering of the appearances of natural things. And so, when they come into contact with his frescoes at Rome, they will not feel constrained to assign some of the most characteristic parts of his great masterpieces there to an inferior pupil, merely because they reveal a strong sympathy with the movement of the Renaissance. They will see that Fra Angelico's personality developed itself quite regularly, that the influence of the architects and the sculptors on the one hand, and of Masaccio on the other, is constant throughout the San Marco period. The one influence can be seen most clearly in the San Marco altar-piece; in the predella picture of St. Cosmo and St. Damian before Lysias; in the carefully drawn Ionic capitals of one of the "Annunciations"; in the beautiful architectural background of the "Madonna of the Corridor," and, yet more, in the admirable spacing of the same picture. The influence of Masaccio is most obvious in the "Crucifixion" of the cloister; in the great "Crucifixion" of the chapter-house; in the "Deposition" of the Academy; in the "Nailing to the Cross"; and in the "Adoration of the Magi." Here, as elsewhere, Fra Angelico's general sympathy with the Renaissance is not only shown in his return to the antique, and in his study, under Masaccio's guidance, of the human form: it is also manifest in the keen interest that he continually takes in man, in Nature, and in the moving world around him. We see it in the portraits scattered here and there

through his frescoes, in the careful rendering of landscape, of trees and flowers. We see it in his fresco of the "Last Supper," where, so far from allowing his imagination to look to other worlds for a setting to his picture, he chooses for his background part of the convent itself, the actual building in which he was. We see it in the faces and headdresses of the eastern nobles, in Cosimo's cell. At San Marco, as throughout his whole career, the master was preparing himself for his culminating achievement.

CHAPTER V

ROME

I

After little more than a decade spent at San Marco, a decade fruitful in achievement, Fra Angelico was summoned to Rome to undertake a commission for the Pope. Eugenius IV. had passed nearly the whole of his eight years' exile at Florence, where he had made a Dominican house, Santa Maria Novella, his headquarters. He had taken a sympathetic interest in the brothers of San Marco; and it was at his suggestion that Cosimo had rebuilt their convent. He himself had stayed within its walls, and had been present at the consecration of its church. Finally, in 1445, he had chosen for the archbishopric of Florence its prior, the saintly Antonino.[1] Having played, thus, so important a part in the early history of San Marco, and being at that time so intimately associated with its princely founder, it is not possible but that he should have

[1] Vasari is in error when he says that it was Nicholas V. who appointed S. Antonino to the archbishopric. Whether he is also in error when he says that the post was first offered to Fra Angelico cannot be proved. But, as Marchese shows, the story is a very improbable one. That Fra Angelico, both on account of his artistic genius and his saintliness, was held in high esteem in Florence, alike by rulers and people, there can be little doubt, and it may well be that the Pope consulted him in regard to the appointment, and that this fact gave rise to the legend which the brothers of the convent repeated to Vasari a century later.

become acquainted with its most distinguished ornament, Fra Angelico. In the Medici palaces, as at San Marco, he had seen many of the friar's works, and had, it would seem, come to regard him as the greatest artist of his time. At any rate when, after his return from exile, he set to work to decorate the chapel of St. Peter's, he sent for the Dominican painter.

It is in the spring of 1447 that we first find Fra Angelico at work in Rome. Eugenius had then, in fact, been dead some weeks; but that it was he who had summoned the artist to the Papal court there can be no doubt. Indeed, it is possible that Fra Angelico may have commenced to paint there during Eugenius' lifetime. But the first entry that we find of a payment made to him in the registers of the Secret Treasury is of March 13th, 1447.

Before passing in review Fra Giovanni's frescoes in Rome, we will first consider those panel pictures of his that belong to his crowning period. Of these, there remain the series of small panels, now in the Florence Academy, which he painted for the silver-press of the Annunziata, the Madonna di S. Bonaventura al Bosco, which is in the same gallery, and the "Last Judgment" of Berlin. The Annunziata panels were painted, it is believed, by the order of Piero de' Medici, who had succeeded in obtaining from the monks the patronage of the altar of the Madonna of the Annunziata, one of the most popular of the shrines of Florence. Pietro spent large sums in beautifying the chapel. And, according to Benedetto Dei,[1] it was in the time of the Signory which took office in January, 1448, that he put his hand to this pious work. At this time

[1] Benedetto Dei, "Cronaca. Ricordi di Firenze." In the Biblioteca Nazionale, Florence. ("Cod. Magl.," XXI., fol. 96, T°.)

Fra Angelico was not in Florence. Whether he executed some of the panels whilst he was still residing in Rome we do not know. But it is not likely that the series was finally completed until his return to Fiesole in 1449.

The present arrangement of the pictures is confusing, and it is difficult for the student to get any clear idea of the appearance of the original work. The decorated panels have been cut into strips, and these strips, detached from each other, are not arranged in any proper order. I trust that I shall not tax too much the patience of the reader if I endeavour to explain precisely what the original form of the work was.

The thirty-four pictures which form the cycle were originally arranged in four unequal divisions, which we will call A, B, C, D. These four divisions were, I believe, the panels of four different portions of the cupboard. And in each separate division, or panel, the pictures, almost square in form, were arranged in three rows one above the other. The order of the scenes was not from top to bottom, as one might suppose who saw them in their present state, but from left to right, beginning in each division with the top row, then continuing with the second row of the same panel, and concluding with the third row. Thus each panel was, in a sense, complete in itself.

In Division A there were nine pictures—three, that is, in each of the three rows—beginning with a symbolical picture representing the "Messengers of the Word of God." The second picture on this panel was the "Annunciation," and it was followed by the other scenes from the early life of Jesus. This division of the series concluded with "Christ among the Doctors."

In Division B there were only three pictures, one, that is, in each row; and in the case of this panel the order of the series was, of course, from top to bottom.

In Division C there were twelve pictures—four pictures, that is, in each row. The series began with the "Resurrection of Lazarus," and concluded with the "Flagellation."

In Division D there were eleven pictures—four in each of the first three rows, and three in the last. The first scene in the last row, which represents the "Last Judgment," is double the width of the rest, and so occupies two squares. This series begins with the "Christ bearing His Cross," and concludes with a symbolical picture representing "The Creed and the Sacraments."

I venture the suggestion that Division A formed originally the panel of a single door of one cupboard of the press; that Divisions C and D were the panels of the double door of another; and that B was the panel of the narrow fixed piece between the two adjoining cupboards.

In regard to authorship, these little pictures may be divided into three groups. In the first there are pictures painted entirely by Fra Angelico. In the second are works for which he supplied the designs, and of which he directly supervised the execution, but which were, in the main, actually carried out by pupils. In the third and smallest group are three pictures from the hand of a follower of his, which show his influence, and which were, I believe, painted under his direction, but in which the pupil, being a young artist of promise, was allowed a somewhat freer hand.

It is, of course, difficult sometimes to fix exactly the border-line between the first and second groups.

PARVVLVS NAT E NOB 7 FILI DAT E NOBIS 7 FACT E PRINCIPAT SVP HVMERV EI YSA. IX. C.
IMPLETI SVNT DIES VT PARERET 7 PEPERYT FILIVM SVVM PRIMOGENITVM. LVCE. II. C.

Alinari photo.] [*Academy, Florence.*

THE NATIVITY.

In the case of pictures that have suffered as much at the hands of incompetent restorers as have these of the Annunziata, it is not always possible to decide at first sight whether a picture is by the master or whether it is a work designed by him, but in the execution of which he has used, for the most part, a pupil's hand as a passive instrument for carrying out his intentions. For the full and adequate discussion of the authorship of all these thirty-five pictures a fair-sized volume would be required. In the case of these paintings, therefore, I must be content for the most part to state only my conclusions.

The pictures of this cycle, which were painted entirely or mainly by Fra Angelico, are the following: the "Symbolical Rose," the "Nativity," the "Circumcision," the "Adoration of the Magi,"[1] the "Flight into Egypt," the "Massacre of the Innocents," the "Resurrection of Lazarus," the "Entry into Jerusalem," "Judas receiving Payment," the "Agony in the Garden," "Jesus made Prisoner," "Christ before Pilate," the "Flagellation," "Christ bearing the Cross," "Christ Stripped of His Clothing," the "Crucifixion," the "Descent from the Cross," the "Ascension."

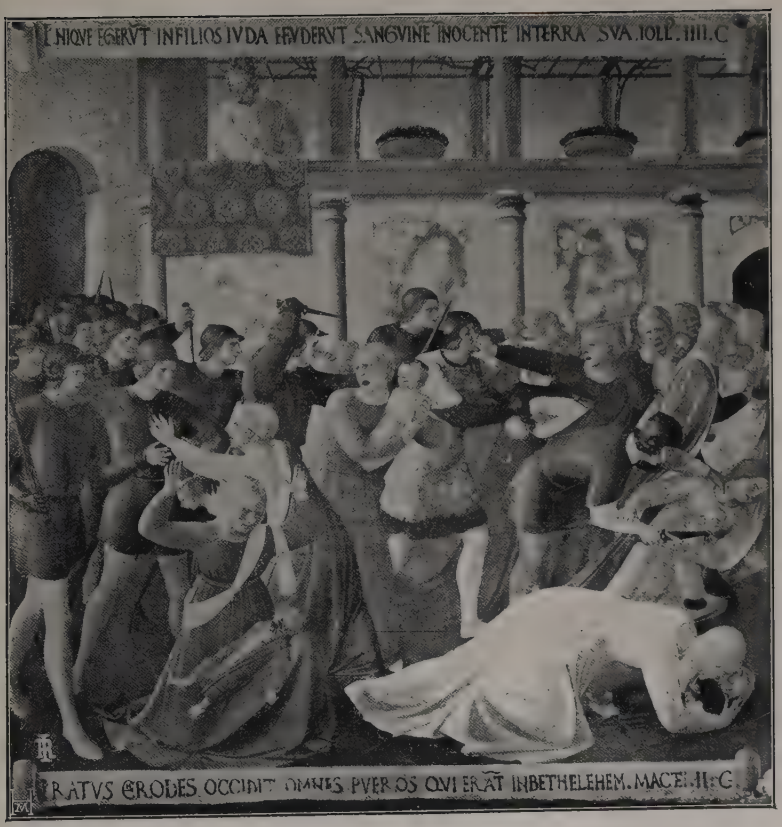
All the remaining pictures, save three, were executed by pupils working under his supervision. In some of them, as in the "Annunciation" and the "Washing of the Disciples' Feet," his hand is clearly traceable. But with others, such as the "Coronation of the Virgin," he had very little to do.

The three remaining scenes, which were painted entirely by a follower of his, are the "Marriage of

[1] This picture is only in part by Fra Angelico. It has, I think, been more injured by restorers than any of the rest.

Cana," the "Baptism," and the "Transfiguration." They are from the hand of Alessio Baldovinetti. For this attribution I will give my reasons later on.

In this cycle of panel pictures we can see the same features that characterize the other works of Fra Angelico's later periods. Nothing could be more uncritical than to class them with the productions of his first period, when his work still shows the influence of the miniaturists. They are by no means faultless works, and even those which are entirely by the master are very uneven in quality. But he who thinks that they have anything in common with the miniature regards only their size. For their very fault, viewed as decorations, is that instead of being small pictures some of them have rather the aspect of preliminary studies for some monumental work. In them, just as clearly as in his other paintings, we can see the proofs of his sympathy with the "return to antiquity" and the "return to nature." His enthusiasm for the revival of classical forms is shown by the fact that in no less than eleven pictures of the series do we find studies of the new Renaissance architecture. The Corinthian capitals and pilasters in the "Circumcision," and the Ionic capitals and pillars in the "Massacre of the Innocents," are especially remarkable. The eager quest of Nature is revealed in the faces of some of the personages in these little pictures, in the treatment of flowers and trees as in his view of the Garden of Gethsemane, and, above all, in that most significant manifestation of his intimate sympathy with her in his painting of landscape. As intimate revelations of thought and emotion, what could be more effective than the "Judas Bargaining with the Priests" or


INIQVE EGERVT INFILIOS IVDA EFVDERVT SANGVINE INOCENTE INTERRA SVA. IOLL. IIII. C
RATVS HERODES OCCIDIT OMNES PVEROS QVI ERAT INBETHELEHEM. MACH. II. C.

Alinari photo.] [*Academy, Florence.*

THE MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS.

ECCE DATA SVNT SVPER TE VINCVLA ET LIGABVNT TE IN EIS. EZECHIEL. III. C.
AT ILLI TENETES EIVS DVXERVNT EVM LIGATVM AD CHAIPHAN PRINCIPEM IVDEORVM MXXVII C

Alinari photo.] [*Academy, Florence.*

ST. PETER CUTTING OFF THE EAR OF MALCHUS.

PE VVLNERAT EST PR INIQVITATES NRAS ATRIT EST PR SCELERA NRA
POSTQ̃NA VENERVT IN LOCVM QVI DICITVR CALVARIE CRVCIFIXERVT EV. IN. XXIII.

Alinari photo.] [*Academy, Florence.*

THE CRUCIFIXION.

the "Flight into Egypt," with the gentle mother clasping the babe to her breast!

And for once the friar shows that he is capable of presenting a scene of blood and violence. The "Massacre of the Innocents"[1] is full of movement. Well realized and admirably rendered, we are made to feel the horror of the event.

Here, too, as elsewhere, in his treatment of landscape the Dominican painter proves himself an innovator. Here, as in the predella of the Cortona "Annunciation," we have a record of an actual scene. In the "Crucifixion" we find Lake Trasimene, with the Isola Maggiore, as it appears from a point near Borghetto. To one who knows well the shores of the lake, who, in one of his later visits, has had with him a careful copy of the friar's landscape, it is impossible not to believe that this picture was either painted during a halt at Cortona in the course of one of his journeys to or from Rome, or that the landscape of it was painted afterwards from a sketch taken when he was upon such a journey. Nothing is more likely than that he should have wished to revisit the convent where he had spent his novitiate. And it is equally probable that he was invited there by the brethren, who already had come to recognize in him one of the chief ornaments of the reformed branch of the order. But the contention that he revisited Cortona in or about 1450 rests upon something stronger than presumptions of this kind. The ruined fresco over the west door of the Dominican church clearly belongs to his last period. The Madonna seems to be closely related

[1] It seems to me that in one, at least, of his four presentations of this subject—that at S. Agostino at Siena—Matteo di Giovanni was scarcely less influenced by the works of Fra Angelico than he was by Botticelli and other Florentines.

to the Madonna del Bosco. The evangelists in the arch recall those on the ceiling of the chapel in the Vatican. It must, in fact, have been painted at some date near 1450 during a pause in a journey from Rome to Florence or from Florence to Rome.

A yet more important innovation in landscape is to be found, as we have already seen, in Fra Angelico's manner of treating aerial perspective. In these panels the movement towards greater truth and beauty of presentation makes a further advance. In the "Flight into Egypt" the hills are made to appear colder and grayer as they near the horizon; and both in that picture and in the "Betrayal" the painting of the sky shows great feeling for space. And what an illimitable firmament is that through which the Christ passes upward, in the panel of the "Ascension"!

Thus does Fra Angelico continually reveal that intimate sympathy with Nature, so new a thing in his day, which found literary expression in the writings of his contemporary Pius II. And this feeling he transmitted to his follower, Verrocchio's master, Alessio Baldovinetti.

That Baldovinetti was, as a young man, associated with Fra Angelico, there can, I think, be little doubt; and it was as his pupil, I maintain, that he painted those three scenes, the "Marriage of Cana," the "Baptism," and the "Transfiguration," which form a part of this series.

Let me briefly state my reasons for believing (1) that these little pictures are by Baldovinetti, (2) that they were painted at the same time as the rest of the cycle to which they belong, and (3) that at that time Alessio Baldovinetti was a pupil of Fra Angelico.

Alinari photo.] [*Academy, Florence.*

THE MARRIAGE IN CANA.

By A. Baldovinetti.

Alinari photo.] [*Uffizi Gallery, Florence.*

THE MADONNA AND SAINTS.

By A. Baldovinetti.

First of all, then, I hold, in common with many others, that these pictures are by Baldovinetti.

They are not, it is now generally admitted, by Fra Angelico, though they show, as we shall see, certain clear traces of his influence. They have all the characteristics of the work of a young artist of genius, and of one who had learned both from Domenico Veneziano and from Andrea del Castagno, as well as from the friar. In view of these facts, the question of their authorship is brought down to very narrow limits. And on examining them closely, we shall find that in certain details they betray the hand of Baldovinetti, one of the most brilliant of the younger artists of that time, who, when the series of panels was being completed, would be about twenty-three years of age.

Let us compare the first of the three — the "Marriage of Cana"—with one of Baldovinetti's earliest known works, the Madonna of the Uffizi. We are at once struck with the marked affinity that exists between the Virgin in the altar-piece and the figure sitting next to the Madonna in the Annunziata panel. So similar are they that the artist would seem to have taken the same model for both. The faces are alike. They are alike in the form and posture of the hands and arms. There is, too, a similarity in the form of the folds of the robe below the girdle. But the strongest resemblance is seen in the treatment of the hair. And it is his manner of painting hair that is one of the most individual things in the style of Baldovinetti. Compare, for example, the fleecy hair of the saint that stands next to St. Laurence with that of the angel who kneels a little behind the other two in the panel of the "Baptism." In the latter the artist shows much less knowledge and a much inferior technique, but that

the same hand painted both is obvious. I know of no other artist of the Quattrocento in whose works is to be found this curious, wool-like hair.

Again, in the "Transfiguration," and still more in the "Baptism," we see evidences of that love of landscape which appears so clearly in the Madonna of Baldovinetti in the Louvre, as well as in his fresco of the "Annunciation" in the cloister of the Annunziata. Of this we shall have more to say later. Here I must content myself with remarking that in this particular also Baldovinetti stands alone, or almost alone. For none of his contemporaries, save perhaps Fra Angelico himself, had such a knowledge of aerial perspective as is shown in the "Baptism" panel.

But it cannot only be proved that these panels are by the hand of Baldovinetti. It can also be demonstrated, I think, that they must have been painted when he was a young man, and at the same time as the rest of the cycle.

There are three chief reasons for believing that these panels were the work of a very young man. In the first place, we see it in the character of the workmanship. Whilst unmistakably by Baldovinetti, in composition, in drawing, and in technique, they are much inferior to his earliest known works. In the "Marriage of Cana" the whole composition is crowded and ill-proportioned, and in the drawing, as in the technique, we do not find that sureness, that freedom that marks his later works.

Secondly, the fact that in the composition the artist has so closely followed traditional lines, that he keeps so near to the rules laid down in the early iconographic manuals in use in the studios, is again a proof that he was still in the position of a pupil. In all three pictures the general scheme of the composition is almost Byzantine. And whilst in other

Alinari photo.] [*Academy, Florence.*

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST.

By A. Baldovinetti.

respects the gulf that separates them from the work of eastern artists is a wide one, nevertheless both the "Baptism" and the "Transfiguration" recall to us Greek and early Russian representations of the same subject.

Thirdly, we see in these pictures the imitativeness of a young pupil who has a great admiration for his master. The skyscape of the "Baptism" recalls to us the firmament in Fra Angelico's "Crucifixion," as well as that in the "Ascension," in the same series of panels. After the friar, Baldovinetti is the first to make his landscape appear to recede to a far horizon, to use for distant objects colder, grayer tones than for those near at hand, to paint the sky in such a way as to impart to us some idea of spaciousness. Nay! in this picture of the "Baptism," in the painting of those gray-blue hills on the far horizon, he advances a step beyond his master's "Flight into Egypt." There was yet, indeed, some distance to be traversed before the art of landscape painting would reach the point it did in the few works of Verrocchio. But the future master of that great pioneer of the landscape art had already made good progress along that road at the commencement of which stands the gentle amorist of Nature, the friar of San Marco.

Very characteristic, too, of the school of Fra Angelico is the decorative use the young artist makes of the male cypress in the "Baptism" and the "Transfiguration." Again, the robes with which he has clothed the angels, in detail as well as in general design closely resemble those worn by the members of the celestial choir in that little panel of the "Assumption"[1] which in Baldovinetti's day was at Sta.

[1] I allude to the reliquary picture that recently belonged to Lord Methuen.

Maria Novella. And in looking at the "Marriage of Cana" we are reminded of the composition of the "Last Supper" by the friar in this same cycle of the Annunziata.

And not only were these panels the work of a young man: they were also, I maintain, executed at the same time as the rest of the series, and in their proper order. In the cycle of thirty-five scenes, these three pictures occupy the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth places. They have for subjects certain important events in the life of Christ, representations of which were always included in such cycles. They must have had a place in the original design of the whole work. The presumption is, therefore, that they were painted in their natural order, and at the same period as the other panels that form the series. It is upon those who hold the contrary opinion that the *onus probandi* rests. It is for them to give adequate reasons for their belief that in the case of this work something exceptional happened, and that these pictures, coming as they do in the middle of a connected series, were painted some time after the others that belong to it. Because these panels are by a different hand, it is not therefore to be inferred without further proof that they are of a later date than the rest. There are other pictures in the middle of the same cycle which were painted entirely by pupils, but of which no critic has ventured to suggest that they were not executed under Fra Angelico's supervision. And, as we have seen at San Marco, it was not contrary to the friar's practice to intrust entirely to an assistant, or to assistants, some of the works in a long series. That these three scenes show a greater divergence from the master's style than any of the others is due to the fact that Alessio Baldovinetti was a great artist,

an original genius with a pronounced idiosyncrasy; whilst the other co-workers of the Dominican painter were only third-rate men who had no original power of their own, and who succeeded best when they allowed themselves to be the mere passive instruments of their master. No doubt a master so kindly, so modest, so free from petty jealousy as Fra Angelico seems to have been, would allow to a disciple of genius greater freedom than to his other pupils.

We have endeavoured to prove that these three panels were the work of Alessio Baldovinetti, and that he painted them when a very young man, at the same period that the rest of the series was executed. It now remains for me to demonstrate further that at that time the young artist was indeed Fra Angelico's pupil.

We have already seen that in these panels Baldovinetti gives abundant manifestations of the friar's influence upon him. In his manner of painting the landscape in the "Baptism," as well as in the treatment of the drapery in the same picture, the artist shows from what school he came. That he had also been influenced by Paolo Uccello and Andrea del Castagno, and that he was afterwards an assistant of Domenico Veneziano, there can be little doubt. But in his earlier work, at least, the influence of Fra Angelico upon him is more obvious than that of any other artist. If we compare this little panel of the "Baptism" with the fresco at San Marco which treats of the same subject,[1] we shall see that the similarities in the two pictures are too striking to be merely accidental. The angel nearest to the Christ, for instance, in the San Marco picture is closely re-

[1] This work is by the hand of a pupil, but of one who was working under Fra Angelico's guidance.

lated to the angel farthest removed from him in the Annunziata panel. In the pose of the figure of the Harbinger, and especially in the left hand catching at the hem of the robe, we observe a like close similarity as we compare the two pictures.

The comparison of Baldovinetti's "Madonna and Child" in the Uffizi with the San Marco altar-piece leads to similar conclusions. The general plan of the composition in the later picture is obviously derived from Fra Angelico's great work. In both we have three saints standing on either side of the Madonna, and two saints kneeling in adoration before her. In both an oriental carpet stretches in front of or under the Virgin's throne. In both the lines of the carpet are so used as to aid the illusion of space. In both a grove of cypresses and palms is seen above a rich curtain stretched at the back of the figures. All these similarities may seem trivial in themselves, and the occurrence of any one of them might be purely accidental. But their cumulative effect is great. Again, the head-dresses of St. Cosmo and St. Damian in the Baldovinetti Madonna are copied from those in the Madonna del Bosco, and the head of St. Damian is the same in both pictures. The St Laurence, too, of the Uffizi altar-piece is closely related to other representations of the same saint by Fra Angelico, such as that in the great "Crucifixion" at San Marco. In the painting of the eye with its small, dark dot of a pupil, as well as in the careful miniature-like representation of grass profusely sprinkled with flowers, we again observe mannerisms borrowed from the friar.

In other works[1] of Baldovinetti the influence of

[1] In so mature a work as the Madonna of the Louvre we can find traces of Fra Angelico's influence. In it the Child is represented resting upon a veil of gossamer. It was the friar who,

the Dominican painter is revealed almost as clearly. But I have, I think, said enough to show that there are strong reasons for believing that Baldovinetti, when a young man, worked for a short period under Fra Angelico, and that it was at that time that he painted these three panels. The greatest inheritance that the younger master received from the elder was a love of landscape, and with it some knowledge of aerial perspective, scanty, it is true, but of the nature of a new discovery, which had come to the older artist through his intelligent sympathy with Nature, and his keen and serious observation of her. That inheritance Baldovinetti himself enriched greatly before he passed it on to Verrocchio, and Verrocchio again increased it before he confided it to Leonardo da Vinci. The same kind of influence, leading ultimately to great triumphs of space-composition, can be traced through Benozzo Gozzoli—who himself, though full of love for landscape, added but little to what he received—to Fiorenzo di Lorenzo. And Fiorenzo di Lorenzo passed on the same enthusiasms to Perugino and the great *paysagistes* of the Umbrian plain.

Another panel picture belonging to this period is

before any other Italian painter, represented the infant Jesus wearing such a veil; and we find the same feature introduced again and again in his works. It is interesting to note that, in the few existing contemporary documents in which we find mention of Alessio Baldovinetti, he is usually associated with some other pupil of Fra Angelico. In the "Diario" of Neri di Bicci we are told that, in 1466, Baldovinetti was co-arbitrator with Zanobi di Benedetto Strozzi in a question relating to the price of a picture painted by the diarist for S. Romolo in Piazza. Again, we know, on the authority of a document quoted by Gaye (*op. cit.*, vol. ii., p. 5), that in the same year he designed the figure of Dante for Domenico Michelino's well-known picture. Lastly, he was associated with Benozzo Gozzoli and others in a valuation of this work by Michelino.

a "Last Judgment," a triptych, now in the Berlin Museum. It is the most important of all the pictures by the master representing this subject, but unfortunately it has been much injured by injudicious restorations, and its original shape has been altered. In spite, however, of all the ill-treatment that it has suffered, a great deal of the charm of this work still remains. It is obviously of the same period as the Orvieto frescoes. In the faces and forms of the blessed sitting tier above tier on either side of Christ, as well as in the general arrangement of these figures, we are reminded again and again of the prophets in the chapel of S. Brizio. The procession of monks and angels up the steep ascent of the cloudy stair to the golden gate is treated with most consummate art. It is most admirably spaced.

The only remaining panel picture of this period of the friar is the Madonna del Bosco,[1] to which I have recently alluded. In it the Virgin is represented enthroned, clad in a blue robe and tunic. The Child, entirely nude, is half standing, half sitting, supported in part by the Madonna's left arm and hand, and in part by her shoulder, against which He leans. The mother's face is full of deep tenderness. The throne is placed in front of a wide canopy resembling a large

[1] The convent of S. Bonaventura, commonly called the "Convento del Bosco," was a Franciscan house, not very far from Cosimo's villa at Cafaggiolo. It was rebuilt by Cosimo, who furnished it with a fine library, and, according to the chroniclers, adorned the church with pictures and rich tapestries. This, no doubt, was one of the pictures that he caused to be painted for it. It is, perhaps, because it was executed at the order of the Medici prince and for a Franciscan house, that we find such prominence given in this altar-piece to St. Cosmo, St. Damian, and St. Francis. In P. Lino Chini's "Storia del Mugello" there are some interesting details about the convent of S. Bonaventura (vol. ii., p. 89, and vol. iii., p. 76, etc.).

Hanfstängl photo.] [*Museum, Berlin.*

THE LAST JUDGMENT.

apse, or the section of a domical building. On either side of this structure, and attached to it, is a wall separated by pillars into four divisions, in each of which is a niche. Surmounting the wall is an entablature with an ornamental frieze; and beyond can be seen palms and cypresses. On either side of the throne and a little behind it stand two angels. In front are three saints on either hand: to the right of the Virgin are St. Francis, St. Louis of Toulouse, and St. Anthony of Padua; to the left, St. Cosmo, St. Damian, and St. Peter Martyr. All these figures are very finely modelled, but especially those in the first group. The splendid vestments of St. Louis of Toulouse, seen between the coarse habits of the two friars, are most beautifully rendered, and the face of the saint is a triumph of subtle characterization.

In this picture we see more fully developed those tendencies of which we have traced the gradual growth in Fra Angelico's earlier Madonnas. We see yet more of maternal tenderness and solicitude in the face of the Virgin and in her attitude towards her Infant. The intimacy of the relationship is more strongly emphasized than ever before. The Child, too, entirely without clothing, leans lovingly against His mother. In no work of art of the Quattrocento, save perhaps in some of the Madonnas of Luca della Robbia, are the essential qualities of motherhood and of babyhood expressed with more artistic subtlety, with more quiet force, with more pathetic beauty.

II

It was in the spring of 1447 that Fra Angelico, summoned to Rome by Pope Eugenius, began to work at the Vatican under the patronage of Eugenius' successor, Nicholas V. The eager little

scholar, whose portrait Vespasiano da Bisticci so admirably drew, was a man of imagination, who saw the vision of a new Rome more beautiful than any city that man had seen, which should be the undisputed capital of the world, the metropolis of letters and of the arts, as well as the metropolis of religion. It was a magnificent aspiration. But Nicholas was no mere dreamer of dreams. And he had not that lack of practical ability which too often, although not as frequently as is popularly supposed, is to be found in conjunction with great learning. He was a keen man of affairs and a great organizer as well as a scholar. Before he began to build he sat down and counted the cost. The man of books pursued his colossal plans with tireless perseverance, with constant forethought, and with such a grasp of detail as his friend Cosimo the financier might well have envied. To advance his great aims he gathered round him scholars like Poggio Bracciolini and Lorenzo Valla, George of Trapezus and Bessarion, Francesco Filelfo and Niccolò Perotti, Guarino of Verona and Biondo of Forlì. And with the same object he set to work to rebuild all the most important structures in the city. Included in his vast scheme was the rebuilding of St. Peter's, of the Vatican Palace, and of the forty churches of the stations. His intention was to reconstruct the wall of the city, to widen and straighten its winding streets, and to provide it with a better water supply. He proposed, too, to fortify the towns of the Papal states, to erect more strongholds upon their frontiers, and to beautify and increase the number of the Papal palaces in subject cities. To carry out these great building schemes he summoned to his court architects and sculptors like Bernardo Rossellino and Leon Battista Alberti, artists in glass and in

intarsia like Fra Giovanni of Rome and Maestro Niccolò of Florence, great painters like Piero dei Franceschi and Benedetto Buonfigli, Andrea del Castagno and Fra Angelico. But death overtook the Pope after he had held the pontificate but eight years and when his mighty task had only just been well begun. And amongst the few works of art still remaining that owe their existence to him, none are of greater importance than the frescoes in his own little studio painted by his friend Angelico—who came to Rome in the same year that Tommaso Parentucelli took his seat on the Papal chair, and who passed from life, in the Eternal City, in the same year as his patron.

But the painting of the Studio of Pope Nicholas was not the earliest work taken in hand by Fra Angelico after his arrival in Rome. In the first year of which we have any record of his labours there, we find him painting in a chapel of St. Peter's. This building lay between the Vatican and the basilica, having exits leading into the palace and the church. It is identical with that called by Vasari the Chapel of the Sacrament. Less than a century afterwards it was destroyed to make room for the great staircase of the palace.

In these perished frescoes were represented scenes from the life of Christ in which Fra Angelico, after his manner, had introduced portraits of living personages—Nicholas V. and Frederick III.[1], S. Antonino and Biondo of Forlì.

One of Fra Angelico's recent biographers is so

[1] When we take into consideration the historical events of 1447-8, and more especially the Concord of Vienna and the events which led up to it, it does not seem an unlikely thing that Frederick's portrait should have been painted here. Some have pointed out that Fra Angelico could not have seen the Emperor

impregnated with the traditional view of the master that he cannot believe that the friar could ever have brought himself down to paint the portrait of any living human being. Willing and anxious to credit any Piagnone legend in regard to Fra Angelico the saint, however slight the evidence, he seeks to throw doubt upon one of the two scanty passages in the early accounts of the master that tell us anything about his artistic achievement. And he does so solely on the ground of Vasari's habitual inaccuracy; even though in this case the Aretine biographer is obviously speaking from his own personal knowledge and with the consensus of one of the greatest historians of his age. In the face of it there is nothing improbable in the statement. Fra Angelico did introduce portraits into his pictures, and in other works of his he certainly painted two, at least, of these very personages whom he is alleged to have represented in the frescoes of the chapel of St. Peter's. Moreover, it is precisely upon a point of this kind that the traditional story as reported by Vasari is to be trusted. For when a biography is obviously written from one narrow standpoint, if its author or authors make statements which do not seem to be confirmatory of their view of its subject, it is precisely those statements that are the least likely to be false or exaggerated. Now the Piagnoni who prompted Vasari in writing this life persistently regarded Fra Angelico as a saint. They despised

until 1451. But the portrait may well have been copied from some other representation of Frederick. The Emperor's features were well known in Vasari's day, as they are in ours. In saying that he had seen this portrait of Frederick in his friend Jovius's house, the biographer is probably speaking the truth; when he adds that it was painted at the time the Emperor arrived in Italy, he is making a conjecture, a conjecture which happened to be wrong.

technique, and convinced themselves that the friar's admirable method was acquired by inspiration rather than by patient effort. Rightly thinking that his conversation was in heaven, they found it difficult to believe that he ever cast his eyes down to observe closely mundane things, or that he could have sought and found the Good in whatever was beautiful and noble in the world around him—in flowers, in the evening sky, and in the faces of his friends. No! according to their view his art was wholly other-worldly. He painted only his visions and regarded the things of this life as common and unclean. If, then, we find in their writings, or in the writings of one like Vasari, who sympathizes with their view, any statement of fact which clashes with this conception of Fra Angelico, that, I maintain—knowing what we do of the master from his work—is just the very statement of all others in them that is most worthy of credit.

But there are other reasons for crediting the assertion of the author of the "Lives." In the first place, he knew these portraits as well as any pictures of the Quattrocento; for, on the destruction of the chapel they had adorned, they became part of the famed collection of portraits owned by his intimate friend and assistant, Paulus Jovius. The historian had made historical portraits a special subject of study, and was the greatest connoisseur and collector of such pictures of his own age and country. He had ample opportunities for proving whether these portraits in question in reality represented the personages named or not. Vasari's "Lives" were written with Giovio's co-operation and under his eye. It is almost impossible that in this matter the Aretine biographer could have gone astray. Here he is speaking for Paulus Jovius as well as for him-

self, and not only for him, but for all those other antiquarians and connoisseurs whom he was accustomed to converse with day by day in the historian's famous "Museum."

There are, therefore, strong reasons for believing the statements of Vasari in regard to these frescoes in the chapel of the Sacrament. It is unfortunate that no fuller description of them has come down to us, and yet more unfortunate that they were not in some way preserved. By their destruction we have lost a valuable link between the San Marco series and the frescoes of the Pope's Studio. We are thus unable to trace, step by step, the friar's development at the most interesting and important period of his life. It is true that we have his works at Orvieto, which were executed in the same year that he was engaged upon the chapel at St. Peter's. But they have suffered so by damp and restoration that they can afford us but little assistance. In fact, too much importance has been attached to these frescoes, which, though they have been carefully restored,[1] yet, except in design and outline, only show here and there the hand of the master himself.

It was shortly after his arrival in Rome in 1447 that Fra Angelico entered into communication with the Operai of the Duomo at Orvieto. He wished to escape from the city during the heat of the summer, and so he had caused it to be reported to the authorities of that cathedral that he was willing to accept an engagement from them. The intermediary was a brother artist and religious, Don Francesco di Barone of Perugia. In due time the

[1] They were restored by two German artists, Herr Both and Herr Pfannenschmidt, in 1845. See Benois, Rasanoff, and Krakau, "Monographie de la Cathédrale d'Orvieto" (Paris, A. Morel and Co., 1877), p. 8.

invitation came. Fra Angelico, whom his new patrons described as "famosus ultra omnes alios pictores Ytalicos," was asked to paint the new chapel of the Madonna di S. Brizio, the Operai[1] offering him payment at a similar rate to that he was receiving at Rome. The friar accepted the proposed agreement, undertaking to go to Orvieto every year for June, July, and August, the months that he did not wish to remain in Rome. The agreement was signed on June 14, and on the following day he commenced his task.[2] He laboured at Orvieto until well-nigh the end of September, and then he left the city never to return. What his reasons were for not continuing his work there we do not know. From the first an evil destiny seemed to hang over it: he had but commenced it when one of his assistants fell from the scaffolding and was killed. Such an incident, coming at its very initiation, must have have been regarded as an ill omen. At any rate other misfortunes followed it. For a few years later it was discovered that the roof was not water-tight, but not before the new frescoes were seriously injured. In the meantime, in 1449, the Operai of the Duomo, after an unsuccessful attempt to induce Fra Angelico to resume the work, made a tentative arrangement with Benozzo Gozzoli;[3] but Benozzo, at this time, was but a second-rate artist, and had not yet begun to reap the fruits of his tireless perseverance and his great enthusiasm for his art, and he seems to have proved himself a very inadequate substitute for Fra Angelico: at any rate the Operai did not continue to employ him. And it was left, finally, to

[1] See Doc. V., p. 184.

[2] For further details see Docs. VI., VII., VIII., and IX., pp. 185, 186, 187.

[3] See Doc. X., p. 187.

Luca Signorelli to complete, fifty years later, the task that Angelico had begun.

Only two divisions of the vaulted roof of the chapel were painted by Fra Angelico. In the one is represented Christ in Glory, surrounded by angels. In the other is a group of prophets, seated upon clouds, tier above tier. Only just enough of the original work is left to prove that it must have been little inferior to the finest achievement of the friar's best period. The figure of the divine Judge is full of strength and grace, and was evidently imagined and drawn by Fra Angelico himself. And I must confess that to me it is difficult to understand how any competent critic who knows well Gozzoli's frescoes at Montefalco, executed but a few years later, could ever have imagined for a moment that this figure is by the younger artist. For at Montefalco, in the fresco representing St. Francis receiving the stigmata, there is a representation of Christ in an attitude somewhat similar to that given to him here, which in conception, as in execution, is immeasurably inferior to this work. The drapery is particularly ill-designed, and the drawing of the left hand and arm is feeble beyond words.

That the prophets are also from the hand of Fra Angelico is clear from their close resemblance to the figures that form the ranks of the blessed in the Berlin "Last Judgment." But the angels that surround the Christ are squatter, squarer, heavier, and in every way less graceful than those to be found in Fra Angelico's works, and have some affinities with the angels painted by Benozzo in his earlier years. They are, probably, by the younger artist, but as they have been very freely restored, it is not possible to come to any very decided conclusion as to their authorship.

Alinari photo.] [*Cathedral, Orvieto.*

CHRIST AS JUDGE.

Alinari photo.] [*San Francesco, Montefalco.*

ST. FRANCIS RECEIVING THE STIGMATA.

By Benozzo Gozzoli.

Fra Angelico, then, returned to Rome in the autumn of 1447; and it is probable that in the course of the following winter he commenced to decorate the little chamber then known as "the Study of the Pope."[1] Upon three of its walls he has painted the stories of St. Stephen and S. Lorenzo. In the upper lunette-shaped portion of each wall are two scenes from the life of St. Stephen. They represent his ordination, the saint distributing alms, his preaching, his defence before the council, his expulsion from the city, and his death by stoning.

In the lower part of each wall are scenes, or a scene, from the life of S. Lorenzo, which in each case correspond with those in the series above them. We are shown here the ordination of the saint, the Pope giving him the treasures of the Church, S. Lorenzo's distribution of these treasures in alms, his appearance before Decius, the conversion of the gaoler, and his martyrdom.

These Vatican frescoes represent Fra Angelico's highest achievement. They are not distinct from his other work. They are the natural result of years of growth and effort. The same artistic qualities are to be found in his earlier pictures, only less fully developed. These frescoes are the highest expression of that which the friar for many years had been striving after. They are an anthology of his artistic virtues.

The most remarkable of the two series are the

[1] For the only reference to these frescoes found by Müntz in the Registers of the Secret Treasury of the Vatican see Docs. XI. and XII. The Register for 1448 is missing. That of 1449, from which this isolated reference is taken, is in such a state as to be, for the most part, quite illegible. Doc. XIII. relates to the windows of the chapel.

"St. Stephen Preaching," the "Martyrdom of St. Stephen," the "Ordination of S. Lorenzo," the "S. Lorenzo giving Alms," and the "S. Lorenzo before the Emperor Decius."

In the "St. Stephen Preaching" the saint is represented standing on a low step hard by the city wall. Before him, seated on the ground, is a group of women which recalls to us a somewhat similar group in a picture which has other affinities with this—I refer to the "St. Peter Preaching" in the predella of the Madonna dei Linajuoli. Here, however, the artist gives us a more intimate presentation of womanhood and motherhood. And this is what we might have expected, bearing in mind the gradual development of the maternal idea which we have traced in his Madonnas. Moreover, these women whom St. Stephen addresses are not depicted as types of high saintship. The artist merely intended to represent a little congregation of ordinary, work-a-day women gathered together to listen to a sermon.

And how sympathetically they are conceived! How well, too, the artist succeeds in making us feel their sweet womanliness! Without any superficial prettiness, they have all the essentially feminine charm of the St. Agnes and the St. Catherine in the Louvre "Coronation," of the St. Mary Magdalene at Cortona, of the representation of the same saint in the "Noli me Tangere" at San Marco, of the three beautiful women in the "Maries at the Sepulchre" in the same convent, of the "Madonna del Bosco."

But it is to the St. Mary and St. Martha in the "Jesus in Gethsemane" at San Marco that they are most nearly related. One of the women in the background—she who sits in front of a Pharisee

Alinari photo.] [*Chapel of Nicholas V., Vatican.*

THE PREACHING OF ST. STEPHEN.

wearing a capuchon—has the same features as the artist gave to her who "was cumbered about with much serving." In this case it is some care-worn housewife who has come to seek consolation in the new teaching.

These beautiful figures owe nothing at all to Fra Angelico's pupils. They have all the master's own peculiar sentiment, all his inimitable, unfailing grace of style. Like all the other good things in this chapel, they are, as we have said, the natural, logical, inevitable outcome of that long process of development which we have traced in preceding chapters.

And, in fact, Benozzo Gozzoli, to whom Wingenroth would give them, was, at least at this period of his career, quite incapable of work like this, so fine in feeling, so consummate in execution. Witness the women that he painted at Rome and at Montefalco! And not even in the frescoes of his best period at San Gemignano is it possible to find any female figures which have the charm of these by his master's hand at the Vatican.

It cannot, indeed, be admitted for a moment that this beautiful group of women owes anything to Gozzoli. For here we see none of the well-known characteristics of his representations of womanhood. We miss the heavy eyelids, the much-arched eyebrows the prominent cheek-bones of his feminine types. Here, too, the drapery is treated with more breadth and freedom than it is in the pupil's early work; the colour, also, is richer and more harmonious, the tones better fused.

And as in the drapery of the women, so also in the forms and faces of the spectators who stand behind them we recognize the hand of the friar, and find in them, too, further evidence of Masaccio's influence upon him.

The Gothic architectural background may indeed have been painted by Gozzoli; for, at this period, as we see in his St. Francis frescoes, he still favoured Gothic forms. And the curious round towers introduced into this lunette, one of which seems to have been suggested by the Castle of S. Angelo, are also familiar features in his works.

In the "Martyrdom of St. Stephen" we see the saint, kneeling in prayer, in the extreme right of the picture. Nearer its centre, and placed a little in the background, is the powerfully-built form of an old man who is about to hurl a stone at the proto-martyr. And in front is another well-modelled figure, whose right arm is extended as though a missile had at that moment left it. On the left stands a group of Pharisees, stern, conscientious, relentless; and prominent amongst them is Saul, who holds the clothes of those who are slaying St. Stephen. In this last massy figure we trace again the effects of the friar's studies in the Brancacci Chapel. Indeed, in all the works of the first half of the Quattrocento—outside the few frescoes of Andrea del Castagno—it is impossible to find any figure showing more obvious marks of the influence of the ill-fated Florentine master.

In the background is a vast, shadowy landscape, which recalls that so ill-used by the restorers in Fra Angelico's "Deposition," as well as that other beautiful stretch of hilly country in the "Betrayal" of the Annunziata panels.

In the "Ordination of S. Lorenzo" we see the Pope, wearing the tiara, seated on the north side of a basilica of a late classical style. He hands the paten and the chalice to the young deacon kneeling before him. Round about stand a few dignified ecclesiastics, one bearing a book, another a censer,

Alinari photo.] [*Chapel of Nicholas V., Vatican.*

THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. STEPHEN.

another an incense-boat, while yet another is engaged in prayer. But all these last are somewhat characterless and uninteresting. It would seem to be the intention of the artist that we should concentrate our whole attention on the principal personages of the scene—on the kneeling saint with his fine young face full of earnestness and expectancy, and on the grave old man opposite to him.

Both here and in the picture representing Sixtus II. giving to S. Lorenzo the treasures of the church, Fra Angelico, in accordance with what was, as we have seen, a not infrequent practice of his, has given us the portrait of a friend in place of a traditional representation. The figure of Sixtus II. in both these frescoes is in reality a portrait of Nicholas V.

In the "S. Lorenzo giving Alms" we see the saint standing at the door of a basilica distributing the treasures of the church to the widow and the orphan, the maimed, the halt and the blind. The head of the martyr recalls that of the S. Lorenzo in the Perugia altar-piece. And the face of the old man, seen in profile, reminds us somewhat of the St. Jerome of the great "Crucifixion." In the hand he extends to receive the gift of the church we see a good example of the type of hand that is most usual in the friar's later works.

Again, the features, the attitude, and the expression of the mother, as well as of the child she clasps to her, are singularly characteristic of Fra Angelico. We have seen a baby closely resembling this, held in just the same position, in the Madonna della Stella, and both mother and infant have the closest affinities with the Madonna and Child on the base of the reliquary picture of the "Annunciation," now at San Marco.

The architectural background, too, reveals the hand of the friar. Twenty-five years before, in the "Presentation" in the Cortona predella, he had painted a basilica seen in perspective. In the intervening time he had become enthusiastic about classical art, and had added immensely to his knowledge of architecture and of the laws of perspective. But yet there is a relationship between these two buildings.

In the details, too, of this background we are reminded of other works of Fra Angelico. The apse of the church, with its shell-like striations above, recalls the canopy in the Madonna of Annalena. The Corinthian capitals on either side of the entrance closely resemble those in the Madonna of the Corridor at San Marco.

The "S. Lorenzo giving Alms" is the most remarkable of the whole series. In fact, it is the greatest of all Fra Angelico's works, the fitting climax of his whole career. In it he sums up all his teaching both as an artist and as a saint. We see in it the influence of Masaccio and Michelozzo on the one hand, the influence of Giovanni Dominici and Sant' Antonino on the other. It is the complete and final expression in art of both the artistic and religious creeds of some of the best men of the early Quattrocento. To the artist it speaks of an artist's sympathy with the natural world, of his enthusiastic study of classical forms. It reveals him as bearing the part of a pioneer in the great artistic movement of his time. To the religiously minded it speaks of a saint's devotion to Christ's new commandment, that commandment which, according to the teaching of the Founder of his faith, contains within itself all other commandments that God has given to men. Here, as at San Marco, he

Alinari photo.] [*Chapel of Nicholas V., Vatican.*

S. LORENZO RECEIVING THE TREASURES OF THE CHURCH FROM POPE SIXTUS.

STUDIES FOR FIGURES IN "S. LORENZO GIVING ALMS" AND "S. LORENZO BEFORE THE EMPEROR DECIUS."

From a drawing in the Windsor Castle Collection.

sees Fra Angelico choosing and presenting one of the corporal works of mercy as a representative of all the rest, and the love motive runs through the whole picture. We see it in the saint giving succour to the widow and the orphan, to the lame, the maimed, the halt and the blind. We see it in the young mother clasping tightly her baby, and looking down at it with a face full of tenderness: we see it in the infant caressing his mother's neck with his tiny hand. We see it in the two children, brother and sister, sharing each other's joy as they go away with their common gift.

These frescoes of the chapel of Nicholas V. are, as we have said, Fra Angelico's crowning achievement. In them we find in their highest development those qualities of which we have traced the growth throughout his artistic career. In them, too, he shows the same predilections that, in an ever-growing measure, mark the works of his earlier period. He triumphantly succeeds in presenting the motherliness of mothers, the childishness of children. His landscape has more than its accustomed charm; and he grapples more successfully than ever before with the problems of lineal and aerial perspective. Above all, here in Rome he indulges to the full his passion for representing classical architecture in the backgrounds of his pictures.

In these Vatican frescoes, it is true, the friar showed more knowledge, more power, a more masterly command of his medium, than he had ever done before; but we find nothing in them unexpected, no new departure. Those critics who argue that important portions of these are by Benozzo Gozzoli show plainly that they misunderstand Fra Angelico's entire artistic career. They all com-

mence, in fact, with a fallacious major premise which vitiates their whole argument. "Fra Angelico," they say, "was not in sympathy with the art movement of his age." "Up to the time that he came to Rome he never changed or modified his style," and "his art always belonged, in a great measure, to the Trecento." "He was, in fact, the last of the Giottesques."

"But in these frescoes," the argument continues, "we see a strong sympathy with the great art movement of the Quattrocento. They certainly have not the character of works of the preceding age. They are not from the hand of a Giottesque, but are thoroughly classical in style. Therefore," they conclude, "they must owe a great deal to some other artist than Fra Angelico."

The syllogism is logically correct, but unfortunately its major premise, I repeat, is untrue. It is merely a re-statement of the old traditional view of Fra Angelico, a view which originated in a prescientific age owing to causes which we have already indicated in a previous chapter. Such a conclusion has not been arrived at after independent observation, by the rigid application of the inductive method. Those who maintain it received it in their childhood from their artistic and religious mentors. It is true that, in some cases, they have sought to discover arguments to justify their conviction by means of *stilkritik*. But in this case the application of the scientific method of criticism has been an afterthought; and they show but too clearly that in reality old prejudices still distort and limit their powers of observation.

As we read the arguments of Dobbert and those who follow him, we can easily see how their theory about the authorship of the Vatican frescoes arose.

Arriving at Rome firm in their belief in the traditional view of Fra Angelico, they found themselves one day in the little chapel whose walls he painted. Being not altogether blind, and having been reared, too, in a more scientific age than their forefathers, they could not help seeing that the frescoes in Pope Nicholas' Studio flatly contradicted their conception of the character of the friar's artistic achievement. "These frescoes," they exclaimed, "are not by the Fra Angelico we know!" But they did not realize that it was in their own inherited ideas about the master that the error lay. Pride of opinion, as well as filial piety, would not permit them to admit it. And so, with Teutonic perseverance, they set to work to attempt to prove that some of the most important features, not merely in the execution of these works, but in their very designs, are entirely due to a pupil.

Now in contending that these frescoes, and especially the S. Lorenzo series, owe a great deal to Benozzo Gozzoli, both Dr. Dobbert and Dr. Wingenroth base their case for the most part on the character of their architectural backgrounds. They are, they say, far too elaborate, too uncompromisingly classical, to be by the hand of the Dominican master. And so they are driven to the conclusion that they must be by the younger artist. But they put out of sight altogether the fact that, ten years before, Fra Angelico had painted architectural backgrounds just as elaborate, just as classical, as these. And they forget how unutterably feeble are Gozzoli's attempts to draw classical architecture at Montefalco.

We have already shown the intimate connection between the architecture represented in some of these Vatican frescoes and that which is to be found in Fra Angelico's earlier works. Here we will take that

fresco which, of all those in the Studio of the Pope, has the most elaborate architectural background—I allude to the "S. Lorenzo before the Emperor Decius"—and we will see how far Dr. Dobbert's and Dr. Wingenroth's theories in regard to its authorship are justified.

I assert that there is not a single feature in this background that is not to be found, just as elaborately treated, in Fra Angelico's earlier works. I maintain, also, that the few details of it that are to be found in the works of Gozzoli's first period show much less knowledge of classical forms and a much inferior sense of the pictorial value of architecture than is displayed in these frescoes at the Vatican. I will prove each of these assertions in detail.

In the fresco at the Vatican we see a throne set under a classical canopy in an apse-like recess. On either side are two pilasters with Corinthian capitals; and in the spandrels of the arch above the throne are flat, plain medallions. Above the arch is an entablature, the frieze of which is adorned with medallions in relief. This same entablature we see continued, at the same level, above a wall which flanks the canopy on either side and completes the background of the picture. This wall is divided by Corinthian pilasters, placed at equal distances, and in front of it hangs a rich brocade. The canopy itself is surmounted by an attic; on either side of which, resting on the wall, are two broad bowls of a kind that afterwards became very common in Florentine pictures.

Now every one of these features is to be found in the friar's other works. The niche with the shell-like striations above is also to be seen in the Madonna of Annalena. Flat medallions, placed in the spandrels of the arch, are introduced in the San

Alinari photo.] [*Chapel of Nicholas V., Vatican.*

S. LORENZO BEFORE THE EMPEROR DECIUS.

Marco altar-piece and in other pictures. The Corinthian capitals of the pilasters supporting the canopy are exact reproductions of the capitals in the same position in the "Madonna of the Corridor" at San Marco; and in that fresco, too, the entablature of the wall which is on either side of the canopy is supported by pilasters with similar capitals placed at equal intervals. Moreover, in this same "Madonna of the Corridor" the canopy is surmounted by an attic adorned with a scroll. The entablature itself, with its frieze adorned with pateræ, is a close imitation of that in the "St. Cosmo and St. Damian before Judge Lysias" at Munich. In the same picture, as well as in the "Massacre of the Innocents" in the Annunziata series, bowls containing plants are to be found in a similar position in the design. A brocade curtain placed in front of a wall in the background of the picture is to be seen also in the Madonna of Annalena.

We see, then, that all these classical forms in the "S. Lorenzo before the Emperor Decius" had found their way into Fra Angelico's pictures some years before; and in one of the pictures of the predella of the San Marco altar-piece, painted almost a decade earlier, we find just as elaborate an architectural background as we do in this fresco.

Bearing this in mind, let us turn to the works painted by Gozzoli about this time. We can discover in them but two or three of these architectural features, and those treated with much less knowledge and power. Looking at Benozzo's work of this period as a whole, we see that the majority of the buildings in his architectural backgrounds are Gothic in character. And in this they match the drapery of his figures, which is certainly more Gothic in design than that of his master.

In his frescoes at Montefalco, Gozzoli has introduced three of the classical features we have observed in the "S. Lorenzo before the Emperor Decius" at the Vatican. We find there some diminutive Corinthian capitals, a frieze adorned with medallions and a decorative scroll, somewhat resembling that with which Fra Angelico ornamented the attic of his canopy, but placed in a position where it appears strange and incongruous. In every case these features are very slight in proportion to the figures, and are altogether mean and insignificant in design.

In fact, in the presence of such a work as the "Meeting of St. Francis and St. Dominic" at Montefalco, the contention of Wingenroth that, because of its massive character, the classical architecture in the frescoes in the chapel of Pope Nicholas must be attributed to Benozzo Gozzoli is nothing less than astounding!

For here is a question for the solution of which no critical eye is necessary, a question which can be settled with something like mathematical certainty. The diameter of the few toy-like columns with Corinthian capitals introduced into the frescoes at Montefalco by the younger artist is one-twenty-fourth of their height: they can scarcely be thicker than the wrists of the saints who stand in front of them. Now in no single case in the backgrounds of classical architecture painted by Fra Angelico himself in his last two periods do we find pillars of which the diameter is less than one-tenth of their height. As a rule it is about one-eighth. In the pictures of Fra Angelico's two later periods, in fact, the architecture introduced is more classical in character, more strongly modelled, and in better proportion to the figures than it is in the works of Benozzo Gozzoli's first period.

And Dr. Wingenroth is scarcely happier when he endeavours to show that the classical elements in the architectural backgrounds of these frescoes are to be traced to Ghiberti's influence on Gozzoli. Ghiberti! that "last and most brilliant representative of Gothic art, who in his works sang its swan-song." Yes! it is true that Ghiberti's influence can be traced in Gozzoli's early pictures. But it did not provoke the young artist to such exhibitions of exuberant enthusiasm for classical antiquity as we see in the chapel of Pope Nicholas. The architectural backgrounds in the frescoes there reveal the influence of that great artist, who, of all the architects of the early Renaissance, had the widest knowledge of classical forms, and was most imbued with the spirit of antique art, Michelozzo Michelozzi. It was Michelozzo's influence on Fra Angelico, in conjunction with that of Biondo of Forlì. and helped by the inspiration the painter derived from direct contact with some of the works of classical antiquity in Rome itself, that ultimately led to the creation of the architectural backgrounds that we see there.

In the same way it can be shown that the figures in this fresco of "S. Lorenzo before the Emperor Decius" are entirely by Fra Angelico. The Roman soldier on the right is a reproduction of the centurion in the "Nailing to the Cross" at San Marco. A very similar figure is to be found in several of the friar's works.[1] The most prominent

[1] The next figure to this, Herr Wingenroth gives to Benozzo Gozzoli, apparently because he thinks that his hands are leaner than those ordinarily painted by the friar. But one of the most obvious of the lesser changes in the Dominican's style is to be traced in his drawing of hands. As years advanced, the hands he gives his personages become less fleshy and more expressive. Compare, for instance, the hands of the angel in the Cortona "Annunciation" with the right hand of the St. John the Baptist

personage, too, in the group behind the saint, I mean the man with long hair in the foreground, is closely related to a figure in the predella picture in the Vatican the subject of which is "St. Nicholas of Bari Preaching." And all the rest of the figures to the right and left of the Emperor reveal just as clearly the hand of the friar.

Finally, Dr. Wingenroth is not justified in claiming that the head of Decius was painted by Benozzo Gozzoli on the ground that that type does not occur in any of his master's works. He says truly that it is copied from a Roman bust. But here again the German critic shows an imperfect acquaintance with the works of Fra Angelico. For the Dominican painter had already copied ancient sculpture before coming to Rome. In that predella picture at Munich to which I have often alluded there is a representation of a Roman deity, imitated from some ancient statue. If, then, ten years before this, Fra Angelico, when living at Florence, had drawn from the antique, is it strange that, at Rome itself, when working for a humanist Pope, such an enthusiast for classical form as he was, having to represent a Roman Emperor, should copy some classical bust when there was a collection of such things under his very eyes in the palace where he was working, and when, at his patron's table, he must have heard eager humanists and connoisseurs discussing constantly their newly-found treasures?

In thus seeking to show that these frescoes owe nothing to Fra Angelico's pupils, and that those features in them that display the artist's full sym-

in the Perugia altar-piece. Then compare the hand of the Harbinger with those given to St. Francis and St. Cosmo in the "Madonna del Bosco." The hands given to this manner are of a type that is common in Fra Angelico's later works.

pathy with the Renaissance are by the master's own hand, I have taken that fresco which out of all those in the chapel in the Vatican is most classical in character, a fresco which shows to the full the painter's knowledge of the architectural forms, the armour and the statuary of antiquity, and I have demonstrated that in it there is nothing foreign to the art of Fra Angelico. Nay more! I have, I think, produced sufficient evidence to prove that for this very reason—that is, on account of the presence of these classical forms—we must give these works to Fra Angelico and to Fra Angelico only, for, beside him, there was no other fresco painter of his own school then working who had such an intimate knowledge of classical forms as these display.

But, indeed, in such a case as this it ought not to have been necessary to resort to the more drastic methods of *stilkritik*. For the portions of the frescoes that Dr. Wingenroth would assign to Gozzoli have qualities which are so obviously lacking in that artist's earlier work. In composition, in colour, and, above all, in drawing and modelling, the younger artist's paintings in Rome and at Montefalco are immeasurably inferior to the later achievement of his master. Gozzoli was a man of an excellent temperament, genial, persevering, teachable, and full of a real love of his art; and as time went on his style improved greatly. But admire as we may such works of his middle period as those in the Riccardi palace, there can be no doubt about it that at first he was quite a second-rate painter. His contemporaries, indeed, had such a poor opinion of his art, that he was not permitted to continue his work at Orvieto, and even twelve years later, when he had earned for himself a better reputation, his employers did not allow him to trust entirely to his

own imagination, but bade him copy, for the central figure of his picture, the Virgin of the San Marco altar-piece. In his early works his colour is much harder, much less harmonious than that of Fra Angelico. His drapery is always poorer and meaner in design than that of his master—this is especially noticeable in the Montefalco frescoes—and the figures in his pictures are flatter and more unarticulated than those created by the friar. There is, in fact, less expression in the forms, as well as in the faces of his subjects.

But it is to Gozzoli's credit, honest, industrious pupil that he was, that he knew good work when he saw it. He had a great admiration for his master, and imitated his style as far as he was able. For this reason there are, of course, certain similarities to be traced in the early works of Benozzo and the later works of Fra Angelico, as we have seen in the case of the fresco of the "Meeting of St. Francis and St. Dominic" at Montefalco. When the younger artist does attempt to reproduce portions of his master's work, he does it in such a way as to betray his own inferiority. And the existence of such similarities by no means justifies the conclusion that the older master imitated his assistant. In fact, to take certain features in a later work of a great artist—features which had been common enough in his earlier pictures—and, upon the pretext of the existence of some of them, in a weaker, cruder form in the paintings of a pupil, to attribute to that pupil those portions of the master's works in which they occur, is, to my mind, to make a most topsy-turvy use of *stilkritik*.

Fra Angelico, as we have seen, had a liking for elaborate architectural backgrounds: he sought to present the essential qualities of motherhood and

childhood ; he had an intimate sympathy with Nature, and loved to paint trees and flowers, and wide stretches of hilly landscape. In these predilections, as well as in certain tricks of style, Benozzo followed him, and sometimes caricatured him. In short, to use the words of Vasari, he "followed his master's manner as far as the inferiority of his talent permitted."

We see, then, in the frescoes of the Vatican just those qualities of which we have traced the gradual development in the earlier periods of Fra Angelico's artistic career. We see, in the first place, that enthusiasm for classical antiquity which he shared with the leaders of thought of his own age. Under the influence of Biondo da Forlì he studied classical architecture, armour and statuary, just as, in an earlier time, he had studied the same subjects under Michelozzo. In the S. Lorenzo series of frescoes we have a remarkable series of adaptations of classical forms. But we find in them no startling innovations. Details of much the same character, but a little more *naïve*, a little less elaborate, appear in many of his earlier works. And it can truly be said that in the whole of the two series in the chapel in the Vatican there can be found nothing so pure in style, so admirable in design, as the classical canopy in the San Marco altar-piece.

Again, in these frescoes at Rome Fra Angelico's interest in nature and in man receives but fuller and completer expression. Those who have a connected idea of his artistic development find here nothing that is strange or unexpected. The idea of maternity here finds expression most beautiful, most consummate. The vast, shadowy landscape in the "Martyrdom of St. Stephen" at once recalls and

surpasses other landscapes by the same master. The clustering hills, capped here and there with castle towers, the clump of olives in the valley, the cypresses looming blackly against the gray slopes beyond—all these recall the scenery around the city that was the home of him whom our fathers loved to call "Fiesole."

These frescoes are rich, also, in manifestations of his subtle power of painting faces full of character. But here again we meet with no unexpected developments. We find, as we expected to find, fewer traditional heads, fewer presentations of mere types, and a larger proportion of presentations of individual feeling and individual character. We find, as we expected to find, a little more of strength, a little more of virility, a little more of purely human feeling, than in his earlier work; but at the same time there is, in reality, no falling away in regard to beauty or spirituality in the faces he transfigures or creates. In the lapse of years he has become more human and not less heavenly. He has arrived at a more robust ideal of manhood and womanhood.

And in the gradual, lifelong process of development, in part consciously, but perhaps in a larger measure unconsciously, the friar's strong admiration for Masaccio was responsible for much. And during this his last period, the great Florentine master, before admired and imitated, became his one ideal painter. Fra Angelico's own individuality was so strong that even a Titan like Masaccio could not altogether overmaster and dominate it. Unlike Fra Bartolommeo in the presence of Michael Angelo's masterpieces, he never forgot himself. He was always true to his own genius. He never tried to be some one else. But as much as he could assimilate of Masaccio, and reproduce in his own way,

Alinari photo.] [*Chapel of Nicholas V., Vatican.*

THE MARTYRDOM OF S. LORENZO.

that we find in the frescoes in the Vatican. Here he gives to the personages he creates bodies more massy, more muscular than those we find at San Marco. Here his line becomes more purely functional, more invariably significant. With what cunning choice out of all possible lines, with what consummate skill in modelling, does he succeed in making us realize the roundness, the bulk, the pressure upon the ground of each individual member of that throng of courtiers and soldiers that surround the throne of the Emperor Decius! And as we look at the figure of the saint in the "St. Stephen Preaching," or at the Saul in the "Martyrdom" of the same series, or at the lame man in the "S. Lorenzo giving Alms," we might almost imagine them to be the work of some Masaccio come to life again, a Masaccio who had lost but little of his strength, and whose work had acquired something more of grace and of loveliness, as well as a subtler power of delineating character.

Fra Angelico's early panels, full of ineffable charm, of lyric grace of line, of colour harmonies most vivid, yet most subtle, are like spring flowers on a little shrine, bright flowers in a golden vase against a golden dossal. Their chief note is a wonderful sweetness and freshness.

But at last out of his sweetness there came forth strength. And we see in him the almost unique spectacle of a man, who, living to a considerable age, yet grew in force and vigour as the years went on, and whose latest work is also his strongest and best.

The rest of Fra Angelico's story is soon told. Towards the close of the year 1449[1] we find him

[1] See Doc. XIV., p. 189.

again at Fiesole, the prior of his old monastery of San Domenico. How long he remained in Tuscany we do not know. It is only recorded that in 1452[1] he was invited to paint the choir-chapel of the cathedral of Prato, an invitation which he did not accept. He died in Rome, in the great convent of his own order, Sta. Maria sopra Minerva, and in the convent church his body was laid to rest. His tomb is not far from the high altar under which lies the greatest of the sisters of St. Dominic—St. Catherine of Siena. Unlike most epitaphs, the inscription on his monument does not lie :

HIC JACET VENE. PICTOR
FR. JO. DE FLOR. ORD.S P̄DICATO. 14LV.
M
CCCC
L
V

NON MIHI SIT LAUDI, QUOD ERAM VELUT ALTER APELLES,
SED QUOD LUCRA TUIS OMNIA, CHRISTE, DABAM ;
ALTERA NAM TERRIS OPERA EXTANT, ALTERA CŒLO ;
URBS ME JOANNEM FLOS TULIT ETRURIÆ.

[1] See Doc. XV., p. 189.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

We have traced the story of Fra Angelico's artistic development, throughout all its successive stages, from its commencement to its close. We have seen him largely influenced at first by the Giottesques and the miniaturists. We have seen him gradually ridding himself of the cramping effects of his early training, and becoming more and more identified with that new movement in art which had begun with the architects and sculptors, and had had for its first pioneer in painting the great Masaccio. We have seen that this development of his was constant, at one time accelerated a little, at another more gradual, but without backslidings or reactions.

There are certain great artistic qualities which are to be found in abundance in his earliest paintings as in his latest: exquisite grace of line, the charm of bright, harmonious colour, singular beauty of facial expression. But as time went on, and the friar continued to grow in power and knowledge, other great qualities became more manifest in his works, and at the same time we can find in them no loss of grace and loveliness. The development of these qualities was due in a measure to Fra Angelico's ever-increasing love of classical art, to his observation of Nature, to his study of the works of his great contemporaries in sculpture, and of the frescoes of

Masaccio. In every way he was in sympathy with the great art movement of his time.

He was an eager student of the antique and keenly interested in the new movement in architecture. The newly-revived classical forms—the Ionic capital, the festoons with which Michelozzo adorned his friezes, the medallions copied by Brunelleschi from the temple of Vesta at Tivoli, and many more beside—found a place in his paintings almost simultaneously with their appearance in the sister art. He was always abreast of the movement. He was always closely associated with those humanists and sculptors who were the leaders of the early Renaissance. Whilst Thomas of Sarzana was cataloguing Niccolò Niccoli's collection of Greek and Latin manuscripts in the library of San Marco, the friar, under Michelozzo's guidance, was reproducing classical motives in the great altar-piece that he was then painting for the convent church. Whilst Biondo was writing his "Roma Instaurata," Fra Angelico, at work under the same roof, was making studies of the architecture, costumes, and sculpture of ancient Rome. And as he was the first of the painters systematically to make pictorial use of classical forms,[1] so there are more representations of them to be found in his works than in all the other pictures of the first half of the fifteenth century taken together. But these antique forms which he loved so, he always used like an artist. He never forgot his true *rôle*. He never allowed himself to become a mere

[1] Almost contemporaneously with Fra Angelico's first presentation of classical forms in painting, we find Masolino and Domenico di Bartolo making occasional use of them, but with less knowledge and less art. Piero dei Franceschi's fine presentations of classical architecture at Rimini, and, above all, at Arezzo, belong to a somewhat later date, as do Fra Filippo Lippi's architectural backgrounds at Prato.

imitator, a pictorial chronicler of the triumphs of artists long dead. Nor, like some of the Italians of the Renaissance, does he make his picture a pot-pourri of scraps of archæological information.[1] He gives us an imaginative treatment of classical forms. He translates them into his own personal dialect. Or rather he makes the "old work of art a starting-point for a new creation."

We have seen that he did not reject the study of Nature, but that up to the last he was continually going to Nature and to the moving world around him for new material for his work. Under the guidance of Masaccio and the sculptors he studied that which of all Nature's products is the most beautiful, and which to a figure painter must ever be the most important—the human body. Always having a keen sense of its material significance, he acquired, as time went on, more knowledge of it and greater power of rendering. His line becomes more functional, his modelling stronger. The St. Agnes and St. Catherine of the Louvre "Coronation," the evangelists on the doors of the Uffizi triptych, the St. Mary Magdalene at Cortona, the St. John Baptist and St. Nicholas of the Perugia altar-piece, the nude Christ in the cloister of San Marco, the St. Mary Magdalene in the "Noli me Tangere," the executioners in the "Nailing to the Cross," the forms of saints in the "Madonna of the Corridor,"

[1] In the "St. Cosmo and St. Damian before the Judge Lysias," to which we have frequently alluded, which was painted soon after he came to Florence, he certainly does show some tendency towards archæological illustration. But only for a moment was his artistic equilibrium disturbed, when he first found himself living in the very centre of the new classical movement. He soon recovered himself, and never again showed such inartistic tendencies.

the Eastern nobles in the "Adoration of the Magi" in Cosimo's cell, the "St. Stephen Preaching" in the Studio of Pope Nicholas, the figure of the saint and the persons grouped round him in the "San Lorenzo giving Alms"—all these creations mark different steps in the friar's triumphant advance.

And if he showed continuous progress in his rendering of the adult form, much more obvious still is his improvement in the painting of the infantile. Here he is an innovator of the innovators. Here, at least, he studied directly from the nude.[1] He was, we have seen, the earliest of the painters to follow the lead of Jacopo della Quercia and Donatello, and to paint the holy child entirely naked, the earliest to give us a complete presentation of babyhood.

Even more remarkable was the part that he played in the history of modern landscape. He was the first Italian artist of the Renaissance to represent an actual landscape from Nature, as he was also the first to attempt to solve certain problems of aerial perspective. In the "Visitation" at Cortona, in the "Flight into Egypt," in the "Crucifixion" and the "Ascension" of the Annunziata panels, in the "Martyrdom of St. Stephen," he shows a feeling for space unrivalled in his own day, and surpassed indeed by but few of the Florentines that came after him.

In his treatment of natural forms, as in other things, he was always a student, always a learner. But, possessing a more exigent sense of the picturesque than some of his contemporaries, he made an entirely artistic use of the knowledge he thus acquired. Just as he never marred his pictures by overloading them with irrelevant archæological facts, so in his

[1] At Dresden there is a drawing of a nude child by Fra Angelico. His later presentations of infants show such knowledge as can only have been acquired by careful study.

Ad. Braun et Cie. photo.] [*Museum, Dresden.*

DRAWINGS.

treatment of Nature he never degenerated into mere realism or sank to the level of scientific illustration. He always treated her like an artist, selecting from her infinite variety the elements for his own beautiful combinations, composing with them exquisite harmonies of line and colour. The roses and pinks that bloomed in the convent garden, the little flowers that grew on the slopes of Monte Egidio where St. Francis's feet had trod, the lake of Trasimene as seen from the ramparts of Cortona, the red-tiled roof and white walls of his own San Marco, the tranquil beauty of the evening sky—all these phrases of melody find their place in his great symphonies.

But if Fra Angelico shows himself a true child of the Renaissance in his curiosity about the natural world, much more does he show it in his attitude towards man, in his recognition of personality, in his realization and delineation of individual character. The Renaissance, as has been so often asserted, not only gave the widest opportunities for the development of individuality, but also led the individual to the most zealous study of himself and of others. The progress and results of this study are to be seen in the biographies of the time, in the works of the Italian novelists, and in the rise and development of the portrait art. In the great movement Fra Angelico was one of the pioneers. What Donatello first sought to express in sculpture, and Vittore Pisano by the art of the medallist, Fra Angelico and Masaccio endeavoured to give utterance to through the medium of an art which is more fitted than any other "for the complete and simultaneous presentation of personality." And in this movement the friar played a more important part than his young contemporary. He shows greater sensitiveness to spiritual impressions, more knowledge, more subtlety

than Masaccio. The heads that he has left us have more individuality than those we find in the Brancacci chapel. Unfortunately, several of the portraits painted by the Dominican have perished; but, nevertheless, there remains a remarkable series of characteristic heads, some of which, undoubtedly, are portraits of living personages.

The history of the evolution of the portrait may be divided roughly into five stages. The painters begin by endowing with new life and character the old traditional types. Then they commence, here and there in their pictures, to substitute for the traditional head the portrait of some friend or patron, the whole figure still being supposed to represent a particular saint. After that, the heads of historical personages, some of them living, sometimes form a part of the decorative framework of the fresco. Then the portraits of the donors of the picture are introduced without any pretence at all, kneeling in adoration of the Madonna or the Christ. Lastly, we arrive at the separate panel portrait. It was Fra Angelico who did more than anyone else to help on the movement through the first three of these stages.

In some cases he does not altogether forsake the old, traditional type, but he realizes it over again for himself. In others he makes the traditional type a starting-point for a new creation. And the head, as he recreates it, is full of individual character.

After this we find him often casting aside the type altogether, and painting in its place another head. We have seen that in this way he introduced the portrait of his friend Michelozzo in the "Descent from the Cross," and a representation of Nicholas V. in the Vatican frescoes, and there can be no reasonable doubt but that he did this in other cases.

To St. Thomas Aquinas, for instance, in San Marco alone, he gives three entirely different heads. In one we see the traditional representation after it has passed through the alembic of Angelico's potent temperament: the other two have all the character of portraits.

In the same way the friar gives sometimes to St. Dominic, St. Francis, and to other saints, visages singularly lifelike, which have no traditional authority. And it is not unreasonable to infer that here again we have portraits, more or less idealized, of pious friends of his, whose characters and appearance he may have thought in some way resembled those of the holy personages he was representing.

Lastly, in the chapter-house of San Marco we find him painting a row of historical portraits, some of them of living personages, in the decorative framework below his picture. And in this, as in so many other things, he was imitated by Benozzo Gozzoli, who has adopted a somewhat similar device at Montefalco.

One of the strangest things in Fra Angelico's work is that, possessing as he did such a remarkable power of presenting character, he was content sometimes to produce vapid and expressionless faces. Of course, in some cases, these heads were the work of pupils; but in others, where his own hand is distinctly traceable, the explanation is to be found, I think, in the rapidity and facility with which he worked. Sometimes he was content merely to reproduce himself, or to paint, without properly realizing it, a traditional head. But, notwithstanding these occasional lapses into conventionality, in his feeling for character he was without a rival amongst the painters of that age. And he is to be reckoned one of the fathers of modern portrait painting.

Finally, we have seen that in technique, as in other things, Fra Angelico was an innovator. He did, indeed, a great service to the art of tempera painting in preserving and perfecting the admirable method of Lorenzo Monaco. But in his manner of painting fresco he set a bad example in deviating from the practice of Giotto. He was the first great fresco painter to make a large use of painting in *secco*, a method which was not so valuable a discipline in the training of the artist, nor so satisfactory, as a rule, in its results as *buon fresco.* In the case of Fra Angelico himself no ill results accrued from this change, but that the introduction of this mixed method proved to be very injurious to the progress of the art, no one who has studied the history of fresco painting can doubt.

But whether the changes that he introduced were wise or unwise, Fra Angelico was always seeking to improve his technique. He was always very much concerned about rendering. He never thought that he had apprehended, but was always striving after some more perfect way of giving material form to the inward picture.

To say, as some do, that Fra Angelico was sometimes more interested in the matter of his theme than in its presentation is only to say what is true of every great Florentine painter of the Renaissance. In Venice there was a love of painting for its own sake. It was not so in Florence. The great Florentines, as has been so often remarked, were, each and all, so much more than painters. They were sculptors. They were poets. Nay more! they were men of science and theologians, archæologists and humanists, and at times, in every one of them, the desire to record mere facts of the natural world,

or to teach some theological or philosophical dogma, predominated over all purely artistic impulses. And it seems to me that a distinguished critic allows them too much merit as artists when he says that it was "upon form, and form alone," that they concentrated their efforts. Unfortunately, in the best of them there is a tendency to illustration.

It is true, of course, that the scientific problems in which some of them were keenly interested were connected with certain artistic problems. It is true that their study of anatomy and of the laws of perspective resulted in the greatest service to art. But the fault of many great Florentines, from Uccello to Michael Angelo, was that they were tempted to treat their subjects scientifically rather than pictorially, and to become mere scientific illustrators.

And just as many Florentine painters were led astray by their enthusiasm for science, so, in the case of others, their artistic achievement suffered owing to their love of archæology, or literature, or theology. Filippino Lippi, for example, hyper-intellectual and neurotic, so different a personality from his father, as he grew older became a very fine literary gentleman, very much concerned about archæological accuracy, and full of allusions either very classical or very modern. We could almost imagine that he spoke with an Oxford intonation! Domenico Ghirlandajo and Benozzo Gozzoli were often little better than artist-journalists. Even Botticelli, "the greatest artist of lineal design that Europe ever had," was often too literary, too much concerned about the subject of his picture. In his early days, his head was always full of some piece of classical lore which he had picked up from some humanist like Poliziano, at his patron's hospitable table in the Via Larga. In all his great classical

works—the "Primavera," the "Birth of Venus," the "Calumny," the "Pallas," the "Dream of Giuliano"—he had some literary passage in his mind, and he adhered very closely to it in his presentation of his theme. In his later days he was full of the lives of the saints, the sermons of Savonarola, and the Apocalypse of St. John. He was always, in fact, somewhat addicted to literary illustration. Indeed it is this failing, combined with his want of virility, and that emotional melancholy of the jaded sensualist which is never far from him, which marks him out as the typical decadent. That, notwithstanding these weaknesses, his artistic achievement stands so high is simply due to the fact that God made him such an artist, that when he set out to paint, in spite of his own perversity, he could not help making great pictures.

A tendency to descend occasionally to illustration, therefore, would not of itself disqualify Fra Angelico from taking rank amongst the great leaders of the Florentine Renaissance. But in reality he is very little guilty of any such failing. The artist and the saint in him worked in such perfect harmony that we are rarely conscious of any effort on the part of the latter to dominate the former. And it is in this fact that lies one of the great secrets of his success. He painted the kind of subjects that he liked best to paint. An artist always does best what he wants to do, what he can scarcely help doing, not what he is forced to do by his paymasters. Now in those days the Church was still the great paymaster, and the Church, of course, wanted religious pictures. Therefore artists had to paint pictures with religious subjects, or to starve. But many of them did not really want to paint religious subjects, and in that case only two courses were open to

them: either they had to strive to render a subject which they did not like, which did not appeal to their imagination, or to paint another subject not religious—at least in the sense in which their employers understood religion—and give it a religious title. Many of the Florentines and most of the Venetians chose this latter alternative. An artist gave the world a more or less agreeable presentation of his wife or his mistress and called it a "Madonna." He painted a picnic-party of well-dressed aristocrats or *bourgeois*, and called the picture a "Sacred Conversation." He painted the beautiful nude bodies of some Italian youth and maid, and wrote under his canvas "Adam and Eve."

But Fra Angelico was driven to no such shifts. Pictures with religious subjects were required of him, and religious subjects were just those that he was longing to paint. And so innate, so essential a part of him, were his artistic qualities, that the fervour of his religious emotion scarcely ever marred the decorative character of his work. In him, as I have said, the artist and the saint, the devout Catholic and the man of the Renaissance, were in perfect harmony.

Living in that wonderful age of the early Renaissance, he was one of its most characteristic products. In every age of accelerated transition that we know of, at some time early in its history, there has arisen a body of men, young men, ardent, enthusiastic, very much in earnest, eagerly welcoming the new teaching and yet not willing to lose their hold on the old, who firmly believe, and would fain make others believe, that the two are not inconsistent with each other. Parties with such convictions have arisen at different times, and with different fortunes, in England, in France, and in Italy in the present century.

There was such a party in Florence in the early years of the Quattrocento—the party of Ambrogio Traversari and Giannozzo Manetti—and to it Fra Angelico belonged. Whether he was right or wrong it is not for me to discuss. But it is my part to take note of this habitual attitude of his, for to it are due some of the qualities of his art. Holding such a position, he was, as a matter of course, an optimist of the optimists. And it is that optimism of his, an optimism neither shallow nor indolent, that constitutes one of his greatest charms. He succeeds in imparting it to us by most subtle means. In contemplating his pictures we become filled with a sense of the glory and beauty of a universe in which God is ever immanent. The artist woos us away from our sorrows, from our consciousness of the world's pain, and makes us look out upon life with his eyes. We believe for the moment that the maladies of humanity are remediable, that they are being remedied, that they are themselves but necessary episodes in the gradual evolution of a more perfect order. We look out upon all things and see that they are very good.

The friar lived in the happy springtime of the modern world: his pictures are full of the spirit of the spring, a spirit of faith and hope and gladness.

APPENDICES AND DOCUMENTS

APPENDIX I

ON THE INFLUENCE OF FRA ANGELICO

THERE are few artists who have had a wider or more enduring influence than Fra Angelico. But, as is the case with other great masters, and notably with Michael Angelo, many of his followers have chosen for imitation his less admirable qualities, and have been especially attracted by his less meritorious works. In his own generation, however, as well as in the generation that succeeded it, his influence was altogether for good.

His most distinguished pupils were Benozzo Gozzoli and Alessio Baldovinetti. After these come Domenico di Michelino and Zanobi di Benedetto Strozzi, and a number of inferior painters and miniaturists.

Amongst the artists who were directly influenced by him, but who were never, so far as we know, associated with him in the production of any work of art, are Filippo Lippi and Domenico Veneziano amongst Florentines, Buonfiglio Buonfigli amongst Umbrians, and, we may add, Sassetta and Giovanni di Paolo amongst Sienese painters.

Indirectly, that is, through Benozzo Gozzoli, he exercised an influence over the Umbrians Niccolò da Foligno and Fiorenzo di Lorenzo, Melanzio and Pier d'Antonio Mezzastris, and over such Florentine followers [1] of Gozzoli as Giusto d'Andrea and Zanobi Machiavelli.

Of Fra Angelico's influence on Alessio Baldovinetti, I have already spoken at some length in Chapter V., and I must refer my readers to what I have said there. I believe

[1] Amongst Gozzoli's pupils at Pisa was the friar's own nephew. But it is impossible to identify any work by him. He would seem to have been an inferior artist.

that a careful study of Baldovinetti's Madonna in the Uffizi, in connection with the San Marco altar-piece of Fra Angelico and other works of his of the same period, will lead them to similar conclusions. The friar imparted his own love of landscape to his young follower, and with it an eager desire to solve those problems of aerial perspective, upon the solution of which its proper presentation depends. From the same master Baldovinetti derived in a great measure his admirable technique, as well as certain predilections and tricks of style. In his painting of the eye, of trees, and of grass, in the curtain and the carpet of the Uffizi altar-piece, in the gossamer veil on which the Child rests in the Madonna of the Louvre, in his passion for wide stretches of mountainous country, for blue-gray distances, in certain types of face that we find in his earlier works, in his manner of painting the higher lights of his pictures—in all these things we recognize the influence of Fra Angelico.

And we can find some of these same mannerisms and predilections—particularly those connected with technique and landscape backgrounds—in such works of Verrocchio and his school as the "Annunciation" of the Uffizi.

Of the part played by Fra Angelico in the formation and early development of Benozzo Gozzoli I have also spoken at length in the penultimate chapter of this book. And neither upon that subject, nor upon the indirect influence that Fra Angelico had, through Gozzoli, on the school of Umbria, shall I say anything more now. My faith in Morelli's conclusions in regard to the early training of Fiorenzo di Lorenzo is unshaken by recent German criticism. That, as Mr. Berenson argues, Fiorenzo owed a great deal afterwards to Antonio Pollajuolo and Luca Signorelli is undoubtedly true. But he received his first inspiration from Gozzoli. And in recognizing that important fact, Mr. Berenson is at one with Morelli. The Umbrians' chief heritage from Fra Angelico—an inheritance that came to them in part directly, and in part through Benozzo Gozzoli—was that deeply intelligent love of landscape, that fine feeling for space, which they afterwards developed to such a remarkable degree. Next in importance to this comes that sincere religious sentiment which we find in the earlier works of the school, which finds its most passionate expression in the works of Niccolò da

Foligno, its most beautiful in the rose-crowned angels of Buonfigli.

Over Buonfigli, Fra Angelico's influence was not merely indirect. In the Umbrian master's banners and altar-pieces we can trace the effects of his study of the great polyptych of Fiesole, then in the church of San Domenico in Perugia, as well as of his contact with the friar's works in Rome.

Fra Angelico's pupil, Domenico di Francesco, called Michelino, is chiefly known by his allegorical picture of Dante, now in the Duomo at Florence. Domenico was born in 1417. He spent part of his youth in the *bottega* of a maker of chests named Michelino, to which fact he owes the name by which he is most generally known. Although he lived to the age of seventy-four years, only one really authentic work has come down to us, although several modern critics, beginning with Cavalcaselle, have sought to attach his name to other school pictures. For my part, I do not think that we have enough evidence to justify any such attributions. The one picture that we know to be by Michelino is not entirely his own work. It owes at least a part of its merits to Baldovinetti. I am, therefore, sceptical of the conclusions of those who claim to have discovered, by the application of the methods of *stilkritik* alone, other paintings by this master.

The allegorical picture of Dante was painted in 1466. Baldovinetti, as I have said, supplied a drawing for the figure of Dante, and perhaps also for other parts of the work. Here Michelino employed an admirable technique, and he shows that he has inherited some of his master's delicate feeling for colour. But the whole picture reveals the artist as lacking in vigour and original power. We fail to find in it any evidences of a strong idiosyncrasy, of a pronouncedly personal style.

Of Zanobi di Benedetto di Caroccio Strozzi we know more than of Michelino. He was of noble descent, both on his father's and mother's side. His mother was an Agolanti. He was born in the year 1412, and received his early training under the Florentine miniaturist Battista di Biagio Sanguigni. He became a *campagno* of Fra Angelico probably about the year 1437, and there are some grounds for believing that he acted as his assistant when the latter was

engaged upon the frescoes of San Marco. Afterwards, as I shall presently show, Zanobi was the chief artist of an important school of miniature at the convent.

In his later years he was frequently employed as a miniaturist, though he did not confine himself only to that branch of art. In 1457 he painted the figure of S. John Gualberto in a book belonging to San Pancrazio. He miniatured, also, two psalters for the Badia of Florence. Of the choral books enriched by his hand that still remain there are two in the Laurentian Library, which he painted in 1463 for the Duomo of Florence, in company with Francesco d'Antonio del Cherico.

He seems to have been much in favour with the Medici, and the only panel picture undoubtedly by him that remains is a portrait of a member of that house, Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici. It is in the Uffizi, in Florence, in a sadly ruined state, and as—amongst other indignities that it has suffered—it has been entirely repainted, it does not throw much light on the artist's style.

Zanobi, in his early years, in 1436, painted a picture for the hospital of Sta. Maria Nuova, but this I have not been able to identify. The only works that we have of the artist that give any clue, then, to his artistic personality are his miniatures. From these we see that he was a copyist of Fra Angelico, preferring his master's earlier manner to his later. In his composition, in his colour, in the types of his saints and angels, he imitated the friar as well as he was able. The principal painting in Book No. 44 at San Marco is obviously inspired by that little reliquary panel on which is represented the Assumption of the Virgin, to which I have frequently alluded. Zanobi had several assistants at San Marco in the years 1446 to 1453, who also adapted, as well as they were able, the motives and types of Fra Angelico's pictures.

Of Fra Angelico's great contemporaries those who were most influenced by him were Fra Filippo Lippi and Domenico Veneziano. It was under the inspiration of Fra Angelico that Filippo infused into his work more charm of colour, more sweetness. Under the same influence he introduced landscapes into his pictures. It is in the "Nativity" at Berlin, in the "Coronation" at the Florence Academy, and, above all, in Sir Francis Cook's "Adoration of the

Magi,"[1] that we see the clearest traces of his appreciative study of the works of the Dominican master.

Domenico Veneziano, who in his early training would seem to have owed so much to the great Tuscan sculptors, reveals in the most important picture of his that remains that he owed something to the influence of Fra Angelico. In the general scheme of composition, and in the architectural background, as well as in the figure of St. Nicholas of Bari, we can trace a connection with the Madonna del Bosco and other of the friar's later altar-pieces.

Fra Angelico's influence was felt not only in Florence and Umbria: we find traces of it at Siena. In the Palazzo Saracini in that city there is an "Adoration of the Magi," a late work of Sassetta, long attributed to Fra Angelico himself, which has the closest affinities with the great Florentine's representations of the same subject. Giovanni di Paolo, too, must have visited Florence and studied the works of the friar. In a predella, which is now in the Istituto delle Belle Arti at Siena, he has borrowed freely from "The Last Judgment" by Fra Giovanni, which is in the Florence Academy.

I only have space here to speak of the artists of Fra Angelico's own day, who were influenced by him. His works have continued to have a direct influence on art up to our own day. In the present century much injury has been done to his reputation, because some of the artist helots of modern commercialism who decorate our churches, thinking to please their employers, have taken Fra Angelico's motives, and have watered them down, and sugared them, to suit the public taste.

In place of the friar's deep religious feeling we are given merely conventional sentiment, in place of his beauty of line and colour, mere prettiness at best. In glass, in mosaic, and in mural paintings, there are to be seen in England countless examples of this kind of flattery of the friar; which, if sincere, is nevertheless derogatory to the artist to whom it is rendered, seeing that such admirers pay this tribute to his least honourable works, and, in so far as they know him at all, are most enamoured by his artistic

[1] See Morelli, "Della Pittura Italiana," Milano, Fratelli Treves, 1897 p. 75.

vices. In view of this fact, it is not surprising that some virile lovers of art, who have tarried little in Italy, have been heard to exclaim that they are "sick of Fra Angelico!" If the present work will bring some of these to realize that there is another and robuster Fra Angelico than that they have known, I shall not have written in vain.

APPENDIX II

FRA ANGELICO AND THE CHOIR-BOOKS OF S. MARCO

Dr. Wingenroth, in the articles in the "Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft" (1898) to which I have already alluded, attributes to Fra Angelico the miniatures of certain of the choir-books now in the library at San Marco. The catalogue numbers of these books are 16, 17, 19, and 44. The miniatures he refers to are by three different hands, and in almost every instance the quality of the work is of such a character that it is difficult to understand how a critic of knowledge and discernment, such as Dr. Wingenroth usually shows himself to be, can have persuaded himself that they are by Fra Angelico. Nor has Dr. Wingenroth any documentary evidence to adduce in support of his views. In fact, all the documentary evidence that we have points to an opposite conclusion. In the volume of "Ricordanze di San Marco" previously mentioned, in which were set down the payments made for the illuminating of the choir-books of the convent, from the year 1444 to 1492, we find that the figures in these books were executed by Zanobi di Benedetto degli Strozzi. And of those now at San Marco, No. 44 is, I believe, adorned with miniatures by this artist. Out of many similar entries in this book of "Ricordanze" I will quote but one, which is under the date September 28th, 1448: "Ricordo come Zanobi degli Strozzi miniatore a auto da me, Frate Constantino di San Marcho, per storia fā nel primo graduale delle feste, fiorini dodici e due partite."

It is very probable that no books were illuminated at

San Marco before 1444. The whole edifice was not completed before 1443. And until the church and convent were finished, the brethren, doubtless, had no time or money to devote to the providing of new choral books. The making of such furniture for their sanctuary would come after the completion of the structural part of the work. Nor, when we regard the amount of Fra Angelico's achievement during his few years of residence at San Marco, does it seem likely that he could possibly have found time to carry out any work of this kind. Moreover, there is no evidence at all to show that he illuminated books when at San Domenico.

But apart from the entire absence of documentary evidence, considerations of style alone would lead me to deny emphatically that any of the books mentioned by Wingenroth were by the master's hand. There was a considerable school of illuminators at work at San Marco in the middle of the Quattrocento, and its members were, of course, influenced by Fra Angelico. There is, however, but a superficial similarity between the works of these second-rate men and those of the great artist they sought to imitate.

I had some difficulty in finding this book of "Ricordanze di San Marco," to which Milanesi made allusion. It is not in the Archivio di Stato at Florence, but in the Biblioteca Laurenziana. (See Cod. 902, "Ricordanze di San Marco, A.") Marchese was not aware of the existence of this volume when he first wrote his "Memorie." His allusions to it in the last edition of that book reveal that he never acquired a very accurate knowledge of it.

DOCUMENTS

I

From the Cronica del Convento di Sant' Alessandro di Brescia, compiled from the books of the convent by Giovan Paolo Villa. See Marchese, "Memorie dei più insigni Pittori, Scultori e Architetti Domenicani," vol. i., Bologna, Romagnoli, 1878, pp. 349, 550.

"I°.—1432. Omissis aliis. 'Item la tavola della Nunziata fatta in Fiorenza, la quale depinse Fra Giovanni, ducatti nove.

"'Item ducatti ij sono per oro per detta tavola, quali hebbe Fra Giovan Giovanni de' Predicatori da Fiesole per dipingere la taola.'"

II

Arch. di Stato, Florence. "Debitori e creditori dell' Arte de' Linajuoli," July 11th, 1433. Quoted by Baldinucci "Notizie de' Professori del disegno da Cimabue in qua," Torino, 1768, vol. i. p. 403; and Gualandi, "Memorie Originale Italiane risguardanti le Belle Arti," Serie Quarta, Bologna, 1843, p. 110.

"Richordo chome detto di e sopradetti operaj alogharano a frate Guido, vocato frate Giovanni, dell' ordine di Sto Domenicho da Fiesole, a dipignere uno tabernacolo di Nostra Donna nella detta arte, depinto di dentro edi fuori con colori, oro e azzurro et arieto, de' migliori et più fini che si truovino, con ogni sua arte e industria, per tutto, e per sua faticha e manifattura, per fiorini cento novanta d'oro, o quello meno che parrà alla sua coscienza, e con quelle figure che sono nel disegno chome di tucto appare alibro de' partiti di detta arte, Segnato D a c. 214." Fior. 190.

III

Arch. Com., Cortona. Il convento di San Domenico. April 13th, 1452. Atto stipulato in Cortona nel Borgo di Porta Pecciogrande nel capitolo della chiesa di S. Domenico ec.

"I frati confessi fuerunt quod quedam Capella et altare site in dicta ecclesia sancti Dominici iuxta cornu sinistrum altaris maioris dicte ecclesie sancti Dominici, que Capella dedicata est, ut dixerunt, sub titulo sancti Thome de Aquino et ad honorem sancti Nicolai pontificis cuius festum est de mense decembris. Ipsa Capella et altare olim fuit verbo per fratres tunc dicte ecclesie, ut dixerunt, consignata nobili viro Nicolao quondam Angeli Cecchi de Cortona ob suffragia et elemosinas olim et tunc factas eidem ecclesie sancti Dominici per ipsum Nicolaum tunc viventem et postea per Michelangelum eius filium et heredem, et ornata et decorata fuit dicta capella tabula et pictura,[1] paramentis, calice, missali et aliis rebus oportunis pro ornamento ipsius altaris per ipsos Nicolaum et Michelangelum, ut ipsi fratres dixerunt. Et ad hoc ut in perpetuum memoria Justi remaneat fratres predicti ut supra ad capitulum congregati per hoc publicum documentum dixerunt et affirmaverunt dictam capellam per fratres predictos olim fuisse concessam dicto Nicolao et nunc ad perpetuam rei memoriam concesserunt per se et eorum subcessores, et vice et nomine dicte ecclesie et conventus dicto Michelangelo filio et heredi dicti olim Nicolai ibidem presenti et aceptanti pro se et suis descendentibus, causis et ocaxionibus antedictis capellam predictam ad honorem et laudem omnipotentis Dei et sancti Thome de Aquino et sancti Nicolai pontificis et omnium Sanctorum curie celestis et pro salute animarum dicti Nicolai et dicti Michelangeli eius filii et eorum descendentium, ecc.

"Roga Cristoforo del fu Onofrio di Santi."

[1] It was probably about the year 1437 that Niccolò gave this picture to the chapel in which it still remains. For it was in 1437 that the friars began to think about decorating their new church at Cortona with pictures.

IV

Arch. di Stato, Florence. Arch. Mediceo, famiglia privata, filza I. Quoted by Gaye, "Carteggio," i. p. 136.

Domenico Veneziano to Pietro de' Medici. Written at Perugia, April 1st, 1438. (Holograph.)

"Spectabilis et generose vir. Dopo le debite rechomandacione. Avisovi per la dio gracia lo essere sanno, desideroso vedervi sanno e lieto. più et più volte ho dimandato de vui, e mai non ò saputo nula, salvo chiò dimandato manno donati, el quale me dise, vui esere in ferara, e sanisimo. hone riceuta gran chonsolacione; e avendo saputo prima dove fosti stato, vaverei schrito per mia chonsolacione e debito; avenga dio che la mia bassa chondicione non merita schrivere a la vostra gientileza; ma solamente el perfecto e buono amore chio porto a vui, e a tuti i vostri, me dà soma audacia de potervi schrivere, chonsiderando quanto io ve sono tenuto et hublighato.

"Hora al presente ho sentito che chossimo à deliberato de far fare, ciò dipinghiere una tavola daltare, et vole un magnificho lavorio. la quale chosa molto me piace, et più mi piacerebe se posibile fuse per vostra megianità chio la dipingiese. et se ciò aviene, ho speranza in dio farvi vedere chose meravigliose, avengna che ce sia di bon maestri chome *fra filipo* et *fra giovane*, i quali anno di molto lavorio a fare. . . ."

V

Arch. dell' Opera del Duomo di Orvieto. Rif. 1443-1448, c. 284, t°. See Fumi, L. "Il duomo d'Orvieto," Roma, 1891, Doc. LXXI., p. 393.

1447, Maggio 11.

"Congregatis in unum et in sepedicta residentia Camerarii Magnificis dominis Conservatoribus Petro Paulo Ghiorii, Jacobo Xpofori et Giorgio Constantii Superstistibu dicte Fabrice, dicto Camerario et spectabili Gentile de Monaldensibus egregio legum doctore, d. Romano Leonardi, Ugolino de Massaria, Andreutio Xpofori, Jacobutio Petri, Petro Mei, Leonardo Colai, Angelo Jacobi Tolli, Jacobo Petri et Xpofaro Bernabutii pro laboreriis dicte Ecclesie

ordinandis et deliberandis ad honorem dicte Ecclesie et considerantes quod cappella nova crucis dicte Ecclesie in conspectu capelle Corporalis est scialbida et non depicta, et pro honore dicte Ecclesie est depingenda per aliquem bonum et famosum magistrum pictorem, et ad presens in Urbe sit quidam frater observantie sancti Dominici, qui pinsit et pingit cappellam S^mi^ D. N. in palatio apostolico sancti Petri de Urbe, qui forte veniret ad pingendum dictam cappellam, et est famosus ultra omnes alios pictores ytalicos, et staret ad pingendum in dicta cappella tantum tribus in anno mensibus, vid: junio, julio et augusto, quia aliis mensibus opportet eum servire S^mo^ D. N. et in dictis tribus mensibus non vult stare Rome, et petit salarium pro se ad rationem ducentorum ducatorum auri in anno et cum expensis ciborum, et quod sibi dentur colores expensis Fabrice, et fiant pontes expensis Fabrice, item vult pro uno suo consotio ducatos septem auri de auro et pro duobus aliis famulis tres ducatos auri, vid: in mense pro quolibet ipsorum et cum expensis ipsorum ; habitis inter eos pluribus collocutionibus, delib: quod dictus Enrigus miles possit conducere pro dicta Fabrica et etiam dictus Camerarius dictum magistrum pictorem cum dictis consotio et famulo cum dictis salariis et expensis et aliis petitis, dummodo promictat servire laborerium totius picture dicte cappelle vel saltem servire in dicta pictura dictis tribus mensibus quolibet anno quousque finiverit totum laborerium.

" Et vocatur dictus magister pictor frater Johannes."

VI

Arch. dell' Opera del Duomo d'Orvieto. Cam. 1445-1450. See Fumi, *op. cit.*, Doc. LXXIV., p. 394.

1447, Agosto 26.

" Pagate ad Giovanni compagno overo garzone di m. frate Giovanni dipentore, li quali esso portò quando andò ad Fiorenza ad comparare azuro oltramarino et azuro di magna, stagno doppio etc.

" It. quando andò ad Roma per comparare colori."

VII

Arch. dell' Opera del Duomo d'Orvieto. Rif. 1443-1448 c. 287 t°. See Fumi, *op. cit.*, Doc. LXXV., p. 394.

1447, Settembre 28.

"Nota quod Petrus Jacobutii Camerarius solvit et satisfecit dicto m. fratri Johanni pictori pro se et suis discipulis pro tribus mensibus cum dimidio, quibus servivit, prout infra patet, manu mei notarii infrascripti sub die XXVIIJ septembris anni predicti."

VIII

Arch. dell' Opera del Duomo d' Orvieto. Rif. 1443-1448, c. 298. See Fumi, *op. cit.*, Doc. LXXVI., p. 394.

1447, Settembre 28.

"Religiosus vir frater Johannes Petri magister picturarum et ordinis observantie fratrum predicatorum conductus ad pingendum in cappella nova dicte majoris Ecclesie cum persona sua et cum personis Benozzi Lesi de Florentia, Johannis Antonii de Florentia, et Jacobus de Poli et cum salariis deputatis et pactis factis, ut supra patet in sua conducta sub anno domini MCCCCXLVII et die XIIII junii per se et suos heredes ac nomine suo et nominibus dictorum Benozzi Johannis et Jacobi, quos secum habuit ad dictam picturam, pro quibus de rato et rati habitione sollempnitur promisit et se taliter facturum et curaturum quod omnia singula infrascripta rata, grata et firma habebunt, et omologabunt, et aliquo tempore contra non facient aut venient, fecit supradicto Petro Camerario presenti et acceptanti pro dicta Fabrica et suis in offitio successores finem et refutationem, quietationem, absolutionem, liberationem, et pactum de alterius non petendo nec agendo in perpetuum de centum tribus fl. auri et de auro et uno tertio alterius floreni auri et de auro, et ad rationem septem libr. den. pro quolibet floreno, quos debebat a dicta Fabrica, tam pro se, quam pro supradictis Benozzo, Johanne et Jacobo, et pro tribus mensibus cum dimidio incoactis die quintadecima mensis Junii prox. preteritis et ut sequitur finitis, et de omni eo et toto quod debebat habere a dicta Fabrica pro expensis per eos factis in hospitio urbevetano ante conductam et pro dictis tribus

mensibus cum dimidio sibi fiendis juxta formam capitulorum dicte sue conducte. Et hoc ideo fecit quia confessus et contentus fuit habuisse a dicto Camerario presente et acceptante supradictas omne set singulas summas et quantitates, etc., etc.

"Actum in residentia dicti Camerarii posita ante plateam dicte Ecclesie iuxta res dicte Fabrice presentibus ser Jacobo Petri Nuti, magistro Johanne Petro Dincalcavecchia pictore et Pancratio Luce vascellario testibus," etc.

IX

Arch. dell' Opera del Duomo d' Orvieto. Cam. 1445-1450. See Fumi, *op. cit.*, Doc. LXXVII., p. 394.

1447, Settembre 30.

"Ad frate m. Giovanni pentore per la provisione sua et di compagni, cioè per tre mesi et mezo che ànno servito ad depegnere ne la capella nuova—ducati d'oro cento tre e mezo.

"Item ad Benozzo per le spese che fecero nell' albergo prima che essi fussero condutti."

X

Arch. dell' Opera del Duomo d'Orvieto. Cam. 1445-1450. See Fumi, *op. cit.*, Doc. LXXXI., p. 395.

1449, Luglio 5.

"A m. Benozzo dipentore per once duo d'azuro fino recò da Fiorenza per prezzo di duo fiorini d'oro larghi all' oncia —lib. 28, sol. 16."

XI

From the Register of the Tesoreria Segreta of the Vatican for the year 1447, ff. 38-39. See Müntz, "Les Arts à la Cour des Papes," Première Partie, pp. 126, 127.

"1447. 9 maggio. A Pietro Jachomo da Forli dipintore a lavorato chon frate Giovanni a la chapella di Santo Pietro adi detto fl. 3 b. 15, e quali ebi di suo salario di q° mexe e XVIII di e stato a lavorare, cioè s' e partito dadi XVIII di marzo perinfino adi due maggio.

" 23 maggio. A frate Giovanni di Pietro dipintore a la chapella si S^to^ Pietro dell' ordine di San Domenicho adi XXIII di Maggio d. quaranta tre, b. vinti sette, sono per la provisione di d. 200 l'anno dadi 13 di marzo perinfino adi ulltimo di maggio prossimo a venire: f. XLIII, b. XXVII.

" — A Benozo da Leso dipintore da Firenze a la sopra detta chapella adi detto f. diciotto, b. dodici, e quali sono per sua provisione di f. VII il mexe dadi XIII di marzo sino adi ulltimo di maggio prossimo: f. XVIII, b. XII.

" A Giovanni d'Antonio de la Checha dipintore a la detta chapella adi detto d. due, b. quaranta due, sono per la provisione di f. 1° il mexe, dadi XIII di Marzo sino adi ulltimo di maggio prossimo: f. II, b. XLII.

" — A Charlo di ser Lazaro da Narni dipintore alla detta chapella f. due b. quaranta due sopra la sua provisione di mexi 2 2/5 a f. uno il mexe e finira (?) a di ultimo di maggio prossimo: f. II, b. XLII.

" — A Jachomo d'Antonio da Poli dipintore ala detta chapella adi XXIII. di Maggio fl. tre, sono per la sua provisione di 3 mexe: e quali debano finire adi ulltimo di Maggio prossimo a f. I. il mexe: f. III, b. O."

" 1447. I° Giugno. A frate Giovanni da Firenze che depigne nela chapella di S° Pietro adi detto f. due, b. trenta nove, sono per choxe asseg° avere spexi per bisogni di detta chapella: f. II, b. XXXVIIII."

XII

From the Register of the Tesoreria Segreta, 1449, fol. 44. See Müntz, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

" 1449. Duc. 182, b. 62, den. 8 in dipinture de lo studio di N. S., cioè per salario di fra Giovanni da Firenze et suoi gharzoni ed altre chosette."

XIII

From the Register of the Tesoreria Segreta, 1451, fol. 191. See Müntz, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

" 1451. 16 mars. Duc. 10 a frate Giovan di Roma[1] per

[1] Fra Giovanni di Roma was one of the greatest Italian masters of the art of stained glass of his time. He was employed also by Eugenius IV.

due finestre di vetro biancho a fatta nelo studio di N. S., una con santo Lorenzo e santo Stefano, e nel altra la nostra donna, che sono in tutto brac. 4, a duc, 2 1/4 il braco, cioe duc 2 1/1 braco."

XIV

Bibl. Laurenziana, Ricordanze di San Marco, A, Cod. 902. f. 26 t°. No date.

"Rimanemo di patto insieme dovesse avere distoria per istoria cioe luna per laltra computato secondo lastima di frate giovanni dipintore priore del convento di Fiesole," etc.

The entries immediately preceding this one, and to which it refers, relate to a "Graduale" which was adorned with miniatures by Zanobi di Benedetto degli Strozzi in the autumn of 1448 and the spring of 1449. This entry, referring to Fra Angelico, seems to be of a somewhat later date than those which go before. Marchese has blundered considerably in regard to it. He says that it is entered "under the date 1448," and from this he concludes that it cannot refer to our Fra Giovanni, painter, but to some unknown artist who was made prior of the convent. But, in fact, the entry is undated. The entries on the same page belong to different years, and that immediately preceding it is of May, 1449. As this one which refers to Fra Angelico seems of a somewhat later date than that which goes before it, but relates to the same transaction, I have concluded that it belongs to the closing months of 1449.

The next document (No. XV.) proves that Fra Angelico was at Fiesole in the spring of 1452.

XV

Arch. del Patrimonio Ecclesiastico, Prato. Arch. dell' Opera del S. Cingolo di Prato. Entrata e Uscita del Provveditore, 1451, 1452. See Marchese, "Memorie dei più insigni Pittori, Scultori e Architetti Domenicani," vol. i., Bologna, Romagnoli, 1878, p. 562.

C. 24. "A Bernardo (di Bandinello Provveditore) detto a di 21 di marzo (1451-52, per un di mandato a Firenze a l'Arciveschovo chon letere del Comune, e che io faciessi

venire frate Giovanni da Fiesole maestro di dipignere per fargli dipignere la chapella de l'altare magiore. L."[1]

C. 24 t°. "A Bernardo di Bandinelo, a di 29 et a di 30 di marzo, per due di mandato a Firenze a Fra Giovanni da Fiesole, e digli che a ogni modo ci venisse per intendessi chon quegli quatro (deputati) et chol potestà, a dipignere la chapela magiore; et chossi lo menai. L.[1]

"A cholui che sta a lato a Checho malischalcho da Firenze, che presta e chavali a vetura, a di deto, per due di teni e ronzino suo quando ci menai e Frate che dipigne che vi vene suso, e menalo in sino a Fiesole; in tutto che le spese, grossi cinque. L1 7 6.

"A Bernardo di Bandinelo, a di primo d'aprile, per un di che andò a Firenze a rimenare el Frate a Fiesole, che mi disono che chossi faciessi. L.[1]

"A Bernardo di Bandinello, a di 5 d'aprile, per un di mandato a Firenze a cierchare di dipintori che venghano a dipignere la chapela magiore; e a cierchare d'uno maestro di vetro per fare la finestra; e chossì ce ne menai quatro. L."[1]

[1] The amount of the payment was never entered.

INDEX TO THE WORKS OF FRA ANGELICO

I.—PAINTINGS

BERLIN. *Museum.*

60A. The Last Judgment.

From the Dudley Collection. Formerly in the possession of Cardinal Fesch.

Triptych. Central panel, 3 ft. 6 in. × 1 ft. 10½ in. Wings, 3 ft. 6 in. × 9¾ in.

CORTONA. *S. Domenico.*

Madonna and Two Saints, with the Four Evangelists (ruined).

This fresco is lunette-shaped, and is over the west door of the church, on the outside. The four evangelists are painted on the inside of the little arch which frames the lunette. The fresco has been much injured by weather, and has been repainted several times.

Madonna and Saints.

This is the only altar-piece by Fra Angelico which is to be found actually above the altar of the chapel for which it was painted.

Panel, 4 ft. 7 in. × 6 ft. 8 in.

Oratorio del Gesù.

The Annunciation.

Formerly at San Domenico.

Panel, 4 ft. 11 in. × 5 ft. 10 in.

Life of the Virgin.

This is the predella of the above altar-piece.

Panel, 8 in. × 7 ft. 4 in.

CORTONA. *Oratorio del Gesù* (continued).

Life of St. Dominic.

This is the predella of the altar-piece at San Domenico, mentioned above.

Panel, 8 in. × 7 ft. 8 in.

DUBLIN. *National Gallery.*

Scene from the Lives of St. Cosmo and St. Damian.

Part of the predella of the San Marco altar-piece (Florence Academy, 281). Other pictures of this predella—of which there were seven in all—are at Munich, Florence, Paris. The whole series were for a long time in the *Farmacia* of San Marco.

Panel, 1 ft. 2 in. × 1 ft. 6 in.

FLORENCE. *Academy.*

No. 166. The Deposition (three pinnacles by Lorenzo Monaco).

From the church of Sta. Trinità.

Panel, 9 ft. 1 in. × 9 ft. 5 in.

No. 227. Madonna and Six Saints.

From the convent of St. Vincent d'Annalena.

Panel, 5 ft. 11 in. × 6 ft. 8 in.

No. 234. [The Annunciation.][1]
The Adoration of the Magi.
The Massacre of the Innocents.

These three pictures, together with the pictures under the Nos. 233 (A. Baldovinetti), 235, 236, 237, 252, 253, 254—a series of thirty-five pictures in all—formerly decorated the silver-press at the SS. Annunziata, Florence.

Each single picture is 1 ft. 3 in. × 1 ft. 3 in., except "The Last Judgment" (see No. 253), which is 1 ft. 3 in. × 2 ft. 6 in.

[1] The series of pictures which were painted to decorate the silver-press of the Annunziata were all, I believe, executed under Fra Angelico's direct supervision, but some of them were actually painted altogether, or in great part, by pupils. These last are printed in brackets, with the exception of the three by Baldovinetti: "The Marriage in Cana," "The Baptism," and "The Transfiguration," which are omitted.

FLORENCE. *Academy* (continued).

No. 235. The Symbolical Rose.
The Circumcision.
The Flight into Egypt.

No. 236. The Nativity.
[The Presentation in the Temple.]
[Jesus among the Doctors.]

No. 237. [The Last Supper.]
Judas receiving Payment.
The Agony in the Garden.
[The Betrayal.]
[Christ Buffeted.]
The Flagellation.

No. 243. Six Scenes from the Lives of St. Cosmo and St. Damian.
Panel.

No. 246. The Entombment.
From the convent of the Congregation of the Temple at Florence.
Panel, 3 ft. 5 in. × 5 ft. 5 in.

No. 250. The Crucifixion.
From the convent of SS. Annunziata at Florence.
Round panel, 7 in. diameter.

No. 251. The Coronation of the Virgin.
From the convent of SS. Annunziata at Florence.
Round panel, 7 in. diameter.

No. 252. The Resurrection of Lazarus.
The Entry into Jerusalem.
[The Washing of the Disciples' Feet.]
[The Last Supper.]
Jesus made Prisoner.
Christ before Pilate.

No. 253. Christ Bearing the Cross.
Christ Stripped of His Clothing.
[The Descent into Hell.]
[The Holy Women at the Tomb.]
[The Last Judgment.]

FLORENCE. *Academy* (continued).

No. 254. The Crucifixion.
The Descent from the Cross.
The Ascension.
[The Descent of the Holy Spirit.]
[The Coronation of the Virgin.]
[The Creed and the Sacraments, called also "Lex Amoris."]

No. 257. Scene from the Lives of St. Cosmo and St. Damian.
Part of the predella of the S. Marco altar-piece (No. 281 in this gallery).
Panel, 1 ft. 2 in. × 1 ft. 6 in.

No. 258. Scene from the Lives of St. Cosmo and St. Damian.
Part of the predella of the S. Marco altar-piece.
Panel, 1 ft. 2 in. × 1 ft. 6 in.

No. 265. Madonna and Six Saints.
From the convent of S. Buonaventura al Bosco, in the Mugello.
Panel, 5 ft. 7 in. × 5 ft. 8 in.

No. 266. The Last Judgment.
From Sta. Maria degli Angeli at Florence.
Panel, 3 ft. 5 in. × 6 ft. 11 in.

No. 281. Madonna and Eight Saints.
This is the great altar-piece of S. Marco at Florence. It was painted in 1439-40. For the predella pictures, seven in all, see under Dublin, Florence Academy (Nos. 257 and 258), Munich, and Paris.
Panel, 7 ft. 3 in. × 7 ft. 5. in.

No. 283. A Pietà and Saints (a predella).
From S. Buonaventura al Bosco, in the Mugello.
Panel, 10 in. × 4 ft. 2 in.

Galleria degli Uffizi.

No. 17. Madonna, with Angels and Saints.
Known as the Madonna dei Linajuoli, painted in 1433.
Triptych, 8 ft. 5 in. × 4 ft. 4 in.

FLORENCE. *Galleria degli Uffizi* (continued).

No. 17. The Preaching of St. Peter, the Adoration of the Kings, and the Martyrdom of St. Mark.
Predella to the above Madonna dei Linajuoli.
Panel, 1 ft. 3 in. × 5 ft. 7 in.

No. 1162. The Naming of St. John the Baptist.
Panel, 10 in. × 9 in.

No. 1290. The Coronation of the Virgin.
From the gallery of Sta. Maria Nuova.
Panel, 3 ft. 8 in. × 3 ft. 9 in.

S. Marco.

Cloister:
St. Peter Martyr.
St. Dominic at the Foot of the Cross.
St. Dominic (ruined).
A Pietà.
Christ as a Pilgrim, with Two Dominicans.
St. Thomas Aquinas.

Chapter-house:
"The Great Crucifixion."

Upper Floor (corridor):
Annunciation.
St. Dominic at the Foot of the Cross.
Madonna and Saints.

Cells:
1. Noli me Tangere.
2. The Entombment.
3. The Annunciation.
4. The Crucifixion.
5. The Nativity.
6. The Transfiguration.
7. Christ at the Prætorium.
8. The Resurrection.
9. The Coronation of the Virgin.
10. The Presentation in the Temple.
31. The Descent to Limbo.
32. The Sermon on the Mount (in part).
33. The Betrayal (in part).
Madonna and Saints.
From the convent of Sta. Maria Novella,

FLORENCE. *S. Marco* (continued).
known as the "Madonna della Stella." Painted at the order of P. Giovanni Masi.
A reliquary panel, 2 ft. 9 in. × 1 ft. 10 in. total measurement. Size of panel, 1 ft. 1 in. by 8 in.

Coronation of the Virgin.
From the convent of Sta. Maria Novella. Painted at the order of Giovanni Masi.
A reliquary panel, 2 ft. 9 in. × 1 ft. 6 in. total measurement. Size of panel, 1 ft. 3 in. by 10 in.

34. The Agony in the Garden.
The Annunciation, and the Adoration of the Magi.
From the convent of Sta. Maria Novella. Painted at the order of Giovanni Masi.
A reliquary panel, 2 ft. 4½ in. × 1 ft. 4½ in. total measurement. Size of panel, 1 ft. 1½ in. by 10 in.

35. The Institution of the Eucharist.
36. The Nailing to the Cross.
37. The Crucifixion.
39. The Adoration of the Magi.
42. The Crucifixion.

All the above are frescoes, excepting, of course, the three little pictures placed in cells 33 and 34.

FIESOLE (near Florence). *S. Domenico.*
Madonna and Saints (repainted by Lorenzo di Credi).
Panel.
The Crucifixion.
Fresco.

LONDON. *National Gallery.*
No. 663. Christ in Glory.
From the convent of S. Domenico at Fiesole. Predella to the altar-piece there.
12½ in. × 8½ in. × 2 ft. 1 in. × 2 ft. 4½ in.

In private possession.
Assumption, and Dormition of the Virgin.
Formerly in the collection of Lord Methuen.

LONDON. *In private possession* (continued).
A panel. One of four reliquaries originally at Sta. Maria Novella, Florence.
Reliquary panel, 1 ft. 10 in. × 1 ft. 2 in.

MADRID. *Gallery of the Prado.*
Annunciation, with predella (Scenes from the Life of the Virgin).
Panel, 6 ft. 3 in. × 6 ft. 3 in.

MUNICH. *Pinakothek.*
Nos. 989-991. Scenes from the Lives of St. Cosmo and St. Damian.
Part of the predella of the San Marco altar-piece (Florence Academy, No. 281).
Panel, 1 ft. 2 in. × 1 ft. 5 in.

ORVIETO. *Cathedral.*
Christ as Judge, and Prophets and Saints.
Ceiling frescoes.

PARIS. *Louvre.*
No. 1290. The Coronation of the Virgin.
From San Domenico at Fiesole.
Panel, 3 ft. 8½ in. × 6 ft. 11 in.

No. 1293. Martyrdom of St. Cosmo and St. Damian.
One of the seven scenes of the predella of the St. Marco altar-piece (Florence Academy, No. 281).
Panel, 1 ft. 2 in. × 1 ft. 6 in.

The Crucifixion.
Fresco (ruined).

PARMA. *Pinacoteca.*
Sala III., 25. Madonna and Four Saints.
Panel, 3 ft. 3 in. × 1 ft. 9 in.

PERUGIA. *Pinacoteca Vannucci.*
Sala V.:
No. 1. Madonna and Child, with Angels.
2. St. Dominic and St. Nicholas of Bari.
3. St. John the Baptist and St. Catherine.
4. A Scene from the Life of St. Nicholas of Bari (part of the predella).

PERUGIA. *Pinacoteca Vannucci* (continued).
5-6. The Annunciation.
7. St. Thomas Aquinas.
8. St. Louis of Toulouse.
9. St. Paul.
10. St. Catherine of Siena.
11. St. Jerome.
12. St. John the Evangelist.
13. St. Laurence.
14. St. Peter Martyr.
15. St. Stephen.
16. St. Mary Magdalene.
17. St. Benedict.
18. St. Peter Apostle.

The above pictures all formed part of the polyptych which was formerly at San Domenico at Perugia. Two of the pictures of the predella are at Rome.

ST. PETERSBURG. *Hermitage Gallery.*
Madonna and Saints.
Fresco (ruined).

PISA. *Civic Museum.*
Sala VI., No. 7. Salvator Mundi.
A banner.

ROME. *National Gallery.*
Nos. 22, 23, 24. The Last Judgment, The Ascension, and Pentecost.
A triptych.

Vatican Gallery.
Madonna and Child, with Angels.
A small panel.

Two Scenes from the Life of St. Nicholas of Bari.
Part of the predella of the Perugia altar-piece.

Chapel of Nicholas V.
Scenes from the Life of St. Stephen.
Frescoes.

Scenes from the Life of S. Lorenzo.
Frescoes.

TURIN. *Pinacoteca.*
Two Adoring Angels.
Panels.

At Leonforte in Sicily, in the church of the Cappuccini, there is a "Last Judgment," the composition of which resembles that by Fra Angelico at Berlin, which Morelli and Frizzoni believe to be by the master. As it has been entirely repainted in oil and altered in other ways, it is impossible, so long as it remains in its present state, to come to any final decision as to its authorship. It may be an original work. It may be only an early and somewhat free copy of the picture now at Berlin.

II.—DRAWINGS

CHANTILLY. *Collection du Duc d'Aumale.*
Christ as Judge. Three angels. A hand.
Pen drawings. Early studies for "The Last Judgment" in the National Gallery at Rome.

DRESDEN. *Museum.*
No. 26. An angel seen full face, with a globe in the left hand. A nude figure of a child.
Pen drawings. Later in date than those at Chantilly.

LONDON. *British Museum.*
Malcolm Collection, No. 1. King David.
Drawn on parchment, on part of a leaf of an antiphonary, executed with a pen, and lightly tinted with a violet wash.[1]

VIENNA. *Albertina Collection.*
The Crucifixion.
A pen drawing. A study for the fresco of the Crucifixion in the corridor of the upper floor at San Marco.

[1] See Cennino Cennini, "The Book of the Art," ed. by Mrs. W. P. Herringham (London, George Allen, 1899), chaps. x. and xiii.

WINDSOR CASTLE.

St. Stephen, a head, and several figures.

The head is a silver-point drawing. The figures are drawn with a pen. Both the head and the figures are studies for the frescoes in the chapel of Nicholas V. in the Vatican. The head, as we have said, represents St. Stephen. One of the figures is a drawing for that of S. Lorenzo in the "S. Lorenzo giving Alms," and the mother and child are studies for the same fresco. The figure to the right is a study for a figure in the "S. Lorenzo before the Emperor Decius."

I do not accept as from the hand of Fra Angelico any of the drawings attributed to him at the Uffizi or the Louvre, nor the drawing under his name in the Lille Collection.

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